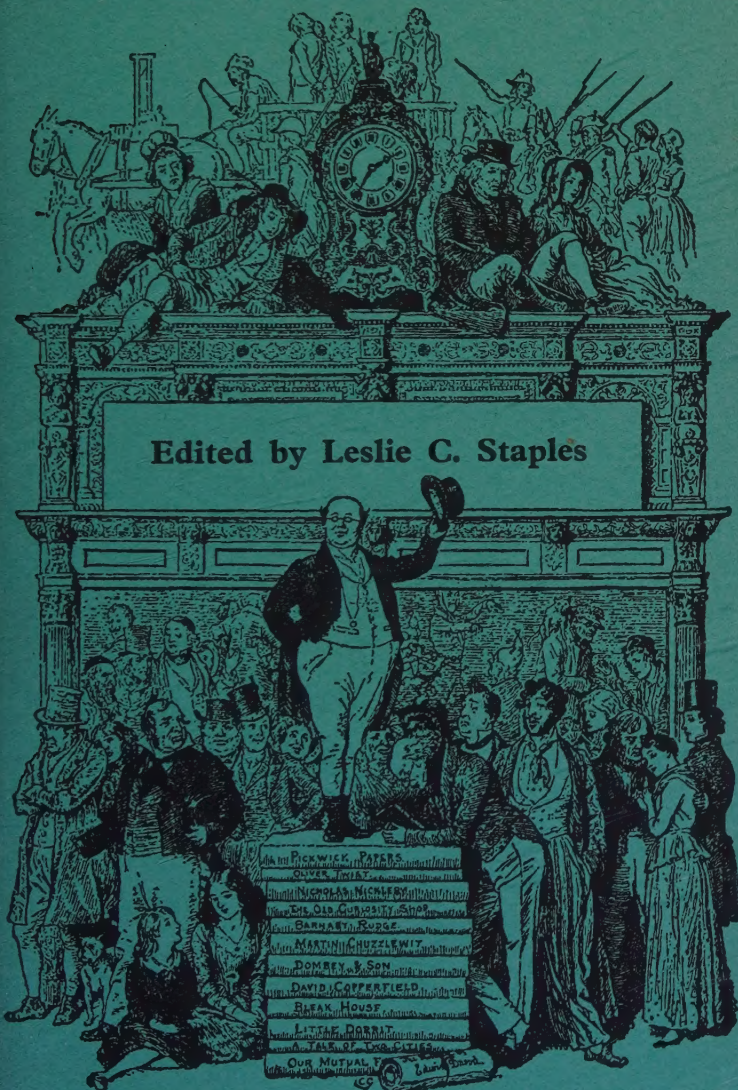


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THE DICKENSIAN



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LETTERS FROM
CHARLES DICKENS
TO
ANGELA
BURDETT-COUTTS



FOR something over a quarter of a century Charles Dickens enjoyed the intimate friendship of Angela Burdett-Coutts, later the Baroness Burdett-Coutts. He corresponded regularly with her, freely giving her the advice she sought regarding her philanthropic activities. In effect he acted as her secretary, sifting the numerous requests from indigent writers, fallen women, impoverished families, stranded travellers . . . But there was much besides business in the letters. A portrait of Dickens himself emerges as, confiding in Miss Coutts, he writes of novels in progress, discussing Mr. Fezziwig and Sairey Gamp, debating how he shall finish *Our Mutual Friend*, revealing in advance the sad ending of *The Old Curiosity Shop*.

For the first twenty years or so Dickens writes in his characteristic lighthearted fashion. Then a sombre note is heard, pre-luding the rupture with his wife and the frenzy of work, travel and continuous readings into which he was driven.

The correspondence (now in the Morgan Library) has been edited by Edgar Johnson of the English Department at City College in New York. In its final form it includes 280 letters, 250 of them from Dickens. The editor has provided a full introduction and separate prefaces to each of the three parts into which the book is divided.

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To be published on September 21st

GOLLANCZ



The Ternan Sisters

Ellen (standing). Maria (on the left), of whose acting with him in *The Frozen Deep*, at Manchester, Dickens wrote long descriptions to Miss Burdett Coutts and to the Hon. Mrs. Watson. Fanny (on the right), who became Mrs. Thomas Adolphus Trollope.

By courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

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WHEN FOUND—

The New President

The Conference held at Manchester in May had the important task of electing a new President of the Dickens Fellowship. The Rt. Hon. the Earl Jowitt, Lord Chancellor in the last Government, was elected unanimously. The Fellowship has been particularly fortunate in its associations with important figures in the legal profession and a further period of prosperity is confidently anticipated under Lord Jowitt's leadership. He will preside at the opening meeting of the new season in the newly restored Hall of Gray's Inn, and will propose the toast of "The Immortal Memory of Charles Dickens" at the Birthday Dinner.

* * * * *

New Vice-President

There was also elected at Manchester a new Vice-President, Professor Edgar Johnson of New York, whose monumental biography of Dickens, the English edition of which is shortly to appear, has won golden opinions on every hand.

* * * * *

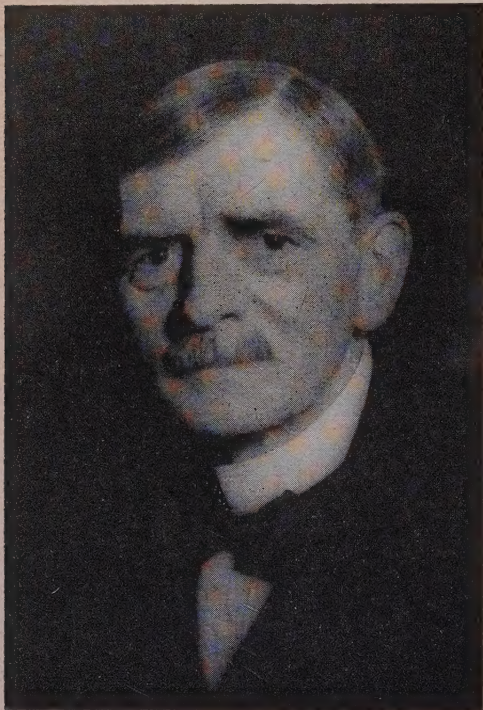
Tittlebats

Pursuing a special study of the *Pickwick Papers*, laid down for this year, members in London undertook a visit to Hampstead one sunny Saturday in June. Mr. John Greaves led them on a tour of many of the historic houses that besprinkle it, *en route* for the "mighty ponds" whose source was the subject of a scientific investigation by the immortal Samuel, as was also the study of tittlebats. Owing to the kindly co-operation of the authorities of the London Zoo, Mr. Greaves was able to exhibit some fine specimens of tittlebats, and to speculate on the nature of the "theory" about them propounded by Mr. Pickwick. Explaining that their habits were singularly promiscuous, Mr. Greaves commented that perhaps it was fortunate that Serjeant Buzfuz had apparently not made a similar study, for had he known that Mr. Pickwick was so interested in creatures of such reprehensible lives, some singular passages might well have been added to his speech in *Bardell v. Pickwick*. By an amusing coincidence, it was but a few days later that we heard, through the medium of one of those delightful "fourth leaders" in *The Times* in the unmistakable hand of an old friend of the Fellowship, that a member of the Department of Zoology of the University of Leiden has recently completed "An Analysis of the Parental Behaviour of the Male Three-Spined Stickleback."

LESLIE C. STAPLES

IN MEMORIAM—T. W. HILL.

BY the death, on July 29th, of Mr. T. W. Hill, the Dickens Fellowship has lost one of its most distinguished, enthusiastic and best-loved members. Indeed his passing marks an era in its history. A member almost from its inception, he had filled the



office of Hon. Secretary (1914-1919), that of Hon. Treasurer (1932-1947), and Vice-President, in addition to being for many years a trustee of the Dickens House. His services to *The Dickensian*, under both the present editor and his predecessor, will probably be never fully appreciated. His exceptionally wide knowledge of his favourite subject, always at the disposal of anyone who sought it, his warm friendliness, and his infectious gaiety, endeared him to everyone and it is difficult to think that he can ever be replaced.

His last appearance among us was in London in October 1952 when he read a characteristic paper, *Meditations in Wellington Street*, full of knowledge, wisdom and understanding. He had attended the Jubilee Conference at Ashridge during the previous month where his greeting, and being greeted by, his innumerable friends from home and overseas, afforded him, and them, great happiness. Until the beginning of this year he had continued working, writing and corresponding on the, to him, ever-green subject of Charles Dickens. Undergoing a severe operation in the Spring, he lost much strength of late and was devotedly cared for by his daughters. He died, peacefully in his sleep, on the day following his 87th birthday.

The huge range of his contributions to this magazine, and particularly his Notes to the novels, the compilation of which occupied ten happy years of his retirement and which are still in course of publication, are his monument in the field of knowledge that owes so much to him and which afforded him life-long pleasure.

His association with the Athenaeum, from the secretaryship of

which he resigned in 1936, when he was elected an Hon. Member, has lasted for more than sixty years. It was in 1924 that he succeeded Mr. H. R. Tedder as editor of Herbert Spencer's *Descriptive Sociology* series and as a trustee under the philosopher's will.

The present writer mourns his loss for his loyal friendship, his generous and meticulous help, and his joyous companionship. The deepest sympathy is extended to his two daughters and his son-in-law.

L.C.S.

"THE OLD LADY" IN SKETCHES BY BOZ

By WILLIAM J. CARLTON

OF the many character sketches in "Our Parish," contributed by Charles Dickens to the *Evening Chronicle* in 1835 and reprinted in the first series of *Sketches by Boz* in the following year, one of the most delightful is that of the old lady, "the best known and most respected among our parishioners, who resided in our parish long before our name was registered in the list of baptisms." It is common knowledge that many of the characters and incidents in this and other sketches were based on recollections of Dickens's happy childhood at Chatham. "Our parish is a suburban one," he wrote, "and the old lady lives in a neat row of houses in the most airy and pleasant part of it." There are good reasons for believing that the parish was St. Mary's, Chatham, and the neat row of houses Ordnance Terrace.

It was probably in 1816 or early in 1817 that John Dickens was transferred from Portsmouth to Chatham with his wife and three young children—Fanny, aged six; Charles, aged four; and Letitia, a baby of a few months. Soon after their arrival the family went to live at No. 2 Ordnance Terrace, which was to be their home for four years or more. Ordnance Terrace was then a block of four three-storey houses pleasantly situated in Ordnance Place, opposite a hayfield and overlooking the Medway in that part of the town known as Middle Borough. In Dickens's sketch Ordnance Place became Gordon Place, and in *The Uncommercial Traveller* Middle Borough was disguised as Dullborough. Among their neighbours at No. 4, then the last house in the terrace, were a retired London tailor and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Newnham, whose ages were sixty-six and sixty-three respectively when the Dickenses took up their residence next door but one. The tailor had previously lived in Basinghall Street, London, and in the parish church of St. Michael Bassishaw, on the last day of November, 1805, had witnessed the wedding of a relative, Sarah Newnham, to William Knight, who lived to be one of his executors. Richard Newnham had prospered in his business and had a nest-egg of several thousand pounds, having invested his capital (like Arabella Allen, the black-eyed young lady who became the wife of Nathaniel Winkle) in 3, 4 and 5 per cent. consolidated annuities, "now standing in my name in the books of the Governor and Company of the Bank of England." As he was also the owner of a house

in St. George's, Southwark, and had no children to provide for, he was in decidedly easy circumstances.

John Dickens would seem to have lost no time in making the acquaintance of his well-to-do neighbours, and his two little girls, Fanny and Letitia, soon became constant callers at the house two doors away from their own. The names of John Dickens and Richard Newnham both appear in the list of contributors to the fund for the relief of the sufferers in the great fire which broke out in Chatham on March 3rd, 1820, to the amount of two guineas each. On July 20th, 1821, about the time that the financial difficulties of the elder Dickens compelled him to move to a smaller house at 18 St. Mary's Place, the ex-tailor made his will, leaving to his widow, in addition to the property in Southwark and a considerable sum of money, all his household goods and furniture, plate, pictures and household linen. The will, a long one, was drawn up with meticulous care and included many bequests of money to various relatives and friends. Among them was one of £300 to one of the executors, Richard Newnham Byrne, to be held on trust for six minors, to whom the accumulated dividends were to be transferred in equal shares on their marriage or when they attained the age of twenty-one. One of the beneficiaries under this provision was "Laetitia Dickens, daughter of John Dickens of the Navy Pay Office, Chatham, Gentleman."

Meanwhile John Dickens had been getting deeper into debt and Mrs. Dickens had presented him with two more boys and another daughter before the family left Chatham for London on his recall to Somerset House in the winter of 1822-23. His affairs went from bad to worse, and when they came before the Court for Relief of Insolvent Debtors in 1824 one of his creditors proved to be his old neighbour, Richard Newnham. Appointed trustee of the defaulter's effects, the ex-tailor declined to act in that capacity, influenced perhaps as much by sympathy for the struggling family as by his advancing years. He died at Chatham on June 12th, 1827, aged seventy-six, but was buried at Mayfield, Sussex.

An indication of the esteem in which John Dickens held his old friend and neighbour may perhaps be found in the circumstance that when his youngest son was born, in the year of Richard Newnham's death, he was given the name of Augustus Newnham Dickens.

The widow, Mrs. Mary Ellen Newnham, lived on in the house at Ordnance Terrace with her devoted maid, Sarah Bourne, until February 19th, 1843, when she succumbed to an inflammation of the lungs, having attained the ripe old age of 89. In her will, dated July 5th, 1839, she expressed a wish to be buried with her husband at Mayfield. She bequeathed her husband's silver watch to his nephew, Thomas Newnham, her wardrobe of clothes and wearing apparel to Mrs. Mary Hollyer, and her japanned India card box, mother-of-pearl fish and gold brooch set with pearls to Mrs. Dorothy Knight. Then follow two more bequests: "To Frances the eldest daughter of my late neighbours John and Elizabeth Dickens and now the wife" [here a blank space was left] "my tortoise shell jewel or trinket box clamped with silver,

with its contents. To Laetitia the second daughter of the said John and Elizabeth Dickens and now the wife of Henry Austin of Blackwall in the County of Middlesex Civil Engineer the sum of fifty pounds stock in the three and a half per cent. reduced bank annuities (part of my stock in that fund), and I direct the same to be transferred to her accordingly. Also my small leather trunk with its contents (and which will be sufficiently designated by me to prevent any mistake)."

To her faithful servant Sarah Bourne the old lady left £25 "as a token of my regard for her good conduct in my service," as well as "suitable and proper mourning." The will was witnessed, as her husband's had been, by J. and M. S. Stevens, and was proved in London on March 8th, 1843.

The terms of the two wills go far to support the statement of Robert Langton, in *The Childhood and Youth of Charles Dickens* (1883), that Dickens's sketch of "the old lady" was based on his memories of Mrs. Newnham. They also bear out the local tradition recorded by the same writer that she was very kind to the Dickens children, the younger girl Letitia Mary, a very pretty child, being her especial favourite. It was some eight years after the demise of the retired tailor and as many years before the widow's death that Dickens wrote: "The house is her own; and it, and everything about it, except the old lady herself, who looks a little older than she did ten years ago, is in just the same state as when the old gentleman was living. The little front parlour, which is the old lady's ordinary sitting-room, is a perfect picture of quiet neatness; the carpet is covered with brown Holland; the glass and picture-frames are carefully enveloped in yellow muslin; the table-covers are never taken off, except when the leaves are turpented and bees'-waxed, an operation which is regularly commenced every other morning at half-past nine o'clock—and the little nicknacks are always arranged in precisely the same manner.

"The greater part of these are presents from little girls whose parents live in the same row; but some of them, such as the two old-fashioned watches (which never keep the same time, one being always a quarter of an hour too slow, and the other a quarter of an hour too fast), the little picture of the Princess Charlotte and Prince Leopold as they appeared in the Royal Box at Drury Lane Theatre, and others of the same class, have been in the old lady's possession for many years. Here the old lady sits with her spectacles on, busily engaged in needlework—near the window in summer-time; and if she sees you coming up the steps, and you happen to be a favourite, she trots out to open the street-door for you before you knock, and as you must be fatigued after that hot walk, insists on your swallowing two glasses of sherry before you exert yourself by talking. If you call in the evening you will find her cheerful, but rather more serious than usual, with an open Bible on the table before her, of which 'Sarah,' who is just as neat and methodical as her mistress, regularly reads two or three chapters in the parlour aloud.

"The old lady sees scarcely any company, except the little girls before noticed, each of whom has always a regular fixed day for a

periodical tea-drinking with her, to which the child looks forward as the greatest treat of its existence. She seldom visits at a greater distance than the next door but one on either side; and when she drinks tea here, Sarah runs out first and knocks a double knock, to prevent the possibility of her 'Missis's' catching cold by having to wait at the door."

It is a fair assumption that "the little girls whose parents live in the same row" were the two sisters of Charles Dickens and that "Sarah" was Sarah Bourne, all three of whom were remembered in the old lady's will. The absence of any reference to Charles himself in that document might seem surprising at first sight; but he was probably a less frequent visitor than the two girls at No. 4 and in any case it seems plain that little Letitia had won first place in the affections of the elderly couple. When Mrs. Newnham made her will in the summer of 1839 she was aware that all three were married, although she had apparently forgotten the name of Fanny's husband, Henry Burnett. She must also have known that the phenomenal popularity of *Pickwick*, *Oliver Twist* and *Nicholas Nickleby* (then nearing completion) had brought substantial monetary reward to their author, whose future was thus assured. It is known that Charles paid several visits to Chatham after his parents had left the town, and it cannot be doubted that he profited by these occasions to renew the old associations with Mrs. Newnham and other neighbours who were still living in Ordnance Terrace. New houses had been added to the original four during the Dickens's residence in Chatham, and more were built after their departure.

From one of Charles Dickens's letters to Catherine Hogarth, written only a week or so before their marriage, it is evident that he had not forgotten the old lady. The lovers had been discussing their plans for a honeymoon. Charles wrote from Furnival's Inn one Sunday evening in March, 1836: "I have been thinking the matter over; and it strikes me, the best plan would be, when we are married, for us to go straight to Rochester. Mother can write to the 'old Lady's' servant; and she, I have no doubt, will procure us comfortable Lodgings there. More about this tomorrow."¹ We know that the honeymoon was spent in the little village of Chalk, near Gravesend; but as Chalk was only a few miles from Rochester the possibility need not be ruled out that the decision to stay at Mrs. Nash's cottage was made on the recommendation of Sarah Bourne or her mistress.

¹ *Mr. and Mrs. Charles Dickens: His Letters to Her*, ed. W. Dexter, 1935, p. 64.

* * * * *

CORRIGENDUM

In No. 304 (September 1952) at foot of page 166 read "solicitor" for "barrister."

A small collection of books on Dickens belonging to the late Frank Staff and presented by his son, have been sold for the benefit of the funds of the Fellowship and have realised £12 11s. 0d.

ANGELA BURDETT COUTTS AND THE VICTORIANS

By K. J. FIELDING

THE new life of Angela Burdett Coutts¹ by the Hon. Mrs. C. B. Patterson will be equally disappointing to the few who are interested in her as one of the most remarkable figures of the nineteenth century, and to the many who may turn to it for its chapter on her "Friendship with Dickens." The book is preceded by a foreword in which it is said that: "So many letters and documents . . . have been destroyed that it has not been found possible to write a full-dress biography"—but that it nevertheless "aims at showing her character and the events of her remarkable career." Yet the biography signally fails to explain what kind of woman she was; it overlooks a number of the most important documents that might have been consulted; and it misuses many of the letters and papers which have been bodily inserted in the work.

The friendships with which the book is chiefly concerned, are those with Charles Dickens, the Duke of Wellington, Rajah Brooke, and Henry Irving; and it is the chapter on the first which deserves examination here. Readers of the last number of *The Dickensian* will remember that a volume of Dickens's letters to Miss Burdett Coutts was edited by Charles C. Osborne in 1931, and that a further selection was brought out in America only last year.² It is, perhaps, the author's misfortune that her work should have been too far advanced for her to be able to obtain copies of these more recently printed letters, but it is even more unfortunate that their existence is not even mentioned. Most of the correspondence in this chapter, and many of the comments, are simply taken from Osborne's *Letters of Charles Dickens to the Baroness Burdett-Coutts*.

Far more disconcerting than this, however, is the use which has been made of Osborne's *Materials for the Biography of the Baroness Burdett-Coutts*, which he collected and presented to the British Museum.³ These included a finished chapter also called "Friendship with Dickens": and, indeed, the *Materials* constitute an ample, largely-completed biography in themselves, which, for some reason, has never been published. It is clear enough that a number of the documents in this collection have been consulted, but equally obvious that they have not been properly referred to, since these papers of Osborne alone would have dispelled the belief that it was "impossible" to write a complete biography. At the same time the actual chapter on the friendship with Dickens has been used extensively, and several long paragraphs have been incorporated in the text without quotation marks or any form of reference to show that the passages were not original.⁴

¹ *Angela Burdett-Coutts and The Victorians*, by Clara Burdett Patterson. John Murray. 18s.

² K. J. Fielding, "A Great Friendship," review of Professor Edgar Johnson, *The Heart of Charles Dickens* (New York, 1952), *The Dickensian*, June 1953, XLIX, 102.

³ Add. MSS. 46402-8.

⁴ The paragraphs between pp. 150-1, or pp. 154-5, for example, are unacknowledged quotations from what the author calls Osborne's "*Friendship with Dickens*." This is the same work as his "Memorandum" mentioned on the next page (p. 152).

No doubt this is no more than an oversight; but the way in which several of the acknowledged extracts omit whole sentences and pages without a sign cannot be said to compensate.¹ Such a treatment of these materials matters all the more because a re-examination of the chapter in the light of the full correspondence, and certain private information, suggest that Osborne was by no means as reliable as the most recent authorities have assumed.

In all fairness, however, it may be suggested that it is the publisher's responsibility to maintain a proper standard in their production of family memoirs. Mrs. Patterson is the great-niece of the Baroness Burdett-Coutts, and has presented a lively assembly of anecdote, extracts and even the results of original enquiry. The chapter on the Duke of Wellington, which gives passages from her correspondence with him, none of which has ever been published before, is particularly important. For the first time we seem to come closer to understanding the great heiress who led such an active life, surrounded by so many friends, and who yet seems so distant and alone. In 1847, when he was seventy-seven and she was thirty-three, it is even shown that she proposed marriage to the Duke and that he thoughtfully and tenderly refused.

Nearly thirty years later, however, she married one of her junior secretaries, a Mr. Ashmead Bartlett, when she was sixty-seven and he was thirty; and it is in dealing with this most important event in the life of the Baroness that the new biography fails. The author rightly says that the death of her companion, Mrs. Brown, had "left what at first seemed an irreplaceable void in the life of the Baroness"; but although no "letters and documents" are needed here, no attempt is really made to describe what led to the marriage and what followed. In stating this we are not trying to belittle Lady Burdett Coutts's achievement or to write about her private life from a merely modern point of view. It was all said long ago, and there can be no understanding of what she was like, or any proper biography, until the folly of her old age is regarded honestly. After discussing the affair with Gladstone, Queen Victoria noted in her Journal that it was an "extraordinary and dreadful idea . . . positively distressing and ridiculous";² and she then followed it up by writing a letter to Disraeli, asking, "What do you say to Lady Burdett Coutts's marriage?!!" He replied that he thought it "the greatest scrape . . . next to Afghanistan," and that although he had once believed that she "would have been an inspiring feature in your Majesty's illustrious reign, the element of the ridiculous has now so deeply entered into her career that even her best friends can hardly avoid a smile by a sigh!"³ The last twenty-five years of her life were deeply marked by the results of a step which was taken against the advice of all who knew her best.

An even stranger omission in the biography, moreover, is the absence of any reference to the fact that the Baroness lost three-fifths of her fortune by her marriage. Her husband was an

¹ The selection of "extracts," pp. 151-4, skips about the chapter recklessly, with nothing to show that they are not consecutive.

² *The Letters of Queen Victoria*, Second Series, ed. J. E. Buckle, III, 134.

³ *Ibid.*, III, 146.

American, and by the terms of the settlement Angela Burdett Coutts would have forfeited it all if an agreement had not been reached with her sister, by which she was allowed to keep rather less than half. No doubt such belated discretion in leaving out all mention of this is due to a desire to avoid the unpleasant remembrance of family differences; but most of these facts were published long ago. There is every reason to believe that the marriage was not a happy one, and in saying that it always seemed to be "as far as one can tell," the author clearly attempts to evade the responsibility of giving a straightforward account according to her original intention.

Any work which helps to explain the Baroness Burdett Coutts must help us to understand Dickens, and everyone interested in Dickens would like to know more about her character and career. In the absence of almost all her replies to his letters she has always seemed a rather indefinite shadowy figure; and so, for the present, she remains. Her letters to Dickens are admittedly among the "documents" which "have been destroyed," yet even without resorting to the Old Codgers of the *Daily Mirror* (pp. 30-1), there is no lack of materials for telling the true story of her life for a biographer who knows where to look and how to organise them properly.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

ELLEN TERNAN

SIR,

Miss Nisbet has told us that her notes might have remained unpublished had it not been for "the violence of certain attacks upon the reliability and integrity of those critics and scholars who have accepted the story of Dickens's liaison with Ellen Ternan as fact." One does not have to be a debunker to sympathise with Miss Nisbet's point of view. Why, when almost everybody who tackles this subject, is accused of relying on gossip and hearsay—why does *The Dickensian* print a statement, "most fortunately obtained" by J. W. T. Ley, from the sisters of the servant of Ellen Ternan? Historians, it appears, need never have investigated the matter.

So long as Dickensians reject one kind of unprovable statement and give publicity to anything which supports their own hopeful opinions, investigators like Miss Nisbet, and ordinary Dickensians like myself, will continue to lose our tempers. If this dreary controversy is ever to be given a well-earned funeral it must be left at this stage to the doctors—to the scholars. Even they have their prejudices; but at least they understand the nature of evidence. Between them they are not likely to be unjust either to Charles Dickens, or to fellow historians.

Yours truly,

V. C. CLINTON-BADDELEY

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP CONFERENCE AT MANCHESTER

CELEBRATES THE GOLDEN JUBILEE OF THE MANCHESTER BRANCH

THE hospitality of Lancashire is proverbial, and this has been amply demonstrated in the Dickens Fellowship. On no less than four occasions in the fifty years of its history, the Manchester Branch has invited Conference to meet in that city. The first of the Conferences was held there in 1906, and others followed in 1920 and 1938. The fourth was the 47th Annual Conference of the Fellowship, held at Whitsun. It was a specially happy occasion as it also celebrated the Golden Jubilee of the Branch.

The city has many intimate associations with Dickens, for an account of which the reader is referred to Mr. F. R. Dean's comprehensive article in *The Dickensian*, 1938, p. 111. On one of the many important occasions on which he spoke there, Dickens said, "I never came to Manchester without expecting pleasure, and I never left it without taking pleasure away." That is a sentiment that is felt by every Dickensian attending the Conferences that Manchester houses so well with such generous regularity.

On the Friday morning the main party from the south was drawn to Manchester by the new British Railways locomotive *Charles Dickens*, the ladies' to find flowers in their rooms'.

In the evening members from all corners of the United Kingdom and others from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States, were received by the Lord Mayor of Manchester, Alderman A. Moss, J.P., M.A., and Mrs. Moss at the Town Hall, the magnificent reception rooms of which were profusely decorated with flowers for the occasion. The Lord Mayor and Mrs. Moss, together with Mr. H. E. Evans, President of the Manchester Branch, and Mrs. Evans, received in the Tower Room, there was dancing in the Banqueting Room, an entertainment in the Lord Mayor's Parlour, and supper was served in the Large Hall with its famous frescoes. A more auspicious opening would be difficult to imagine.

THE BUSINESS MEETING

On Saturday morning the Business Meeting at the Town Hall, was formally opened by the Lord Mayor, who, in an admirable speech, emphasised the fact, sometimes overlooked, that many social problems of Dickens's generation had by no means been fully solved and expressed the view that efforts should be made to bring people to understand fully the cultural values and social problems for which Dickens strove so valiantly.

The President of the Manchester Branch, Mr. H. E. Evans, thanked the Lord Mayor for his speech, and expressed the thanks of the Fellowship to him and to the City of Manchester for the warmth and cordiality of the generous welcome Conference had received, both on the previous evening and that morning. Mr. Evans's proposal was greeted with enthusiasm, and the Lord Mayor proceeded to other engagements.

Then followed the Chairman's address, by Miss Marion Pool (Manchester), Chairman of Council, who opened by paying a tribute to her predecessor, the late Sir John Shuckburgh. Like the Lord Mayor, Miss Pool stressed the fact that much remains to be done, in the words of the Aims of the Dickens Fellowship, "to help in every possible direction in the cause of the poor and oppressed," and admirably illustrated her thesis by quotations from Dickens's recorded speeches. It is not enough, continued Miss Pool, for us to admire his genius and keep his memory green; we should neglect no opportunity of emulating his crusading spirit and use our energies and sympathies with the same generosity of purpose.

The formal business of the meeting then proceeded. After the roll-call of Branches, Mrs. Maud Orton, of the Boston (Mass.) Branch, expressed the greeting of her colleagues in New England, indeed, as she put it, "the love and greetings from the people of the United States to the people of the British Commonwealth. Let us be united closely in a common objective to strengthen the right to enjoy our God-given freedom and work together for Peace on Earth."

The Report of Council read by Mr. Greaves, opened with a brief account of the novel and elaborate plans for the celebration of the Fellowship's Jubilee, so successfully carried out last year, and paid tribute to the generous aid afforded the Fellowship at that memorable point in its history by the *News Chronicle*. This included the publication of Mr. R. J. Cruikshank's *Humour of Dickens*, and the organisation of the Royal Matinee at Drury Lane, at which Mr. Emlyn Williams generously repeated his unique performance of Dickens Readings. By means of these notable events, the *News Chronicle* had enabled the Fellowship to complete the Dickens House Endowment Fund (the Walter Dexter Memorial), as the Hon. Treasurer reported later.

Mr. Greaves then reviewed the experiences of Dickens's work on the stage, screen, and radio, during the year, in some of which the Fellowship had played a part, and then passed to the subject of the branches. There were, he said, one or two that were not flourishing at present, but none had ceased to function during the year. The great majority were in full health, and a new one had been formed in Dunedin, New Zealand, of which the highest hopes were entertained. This year, in addition to Manchester itself, there were being celebrated the Golden Jubilees of the Branches at Edinburgh, Liverpool, Nottingham and Rochester. The original branch at Portsmouth had also been formed in 1903 but there had been a break there for some while. Mr. Greaves stressed the debt the Fellowship owed everywhere to the countless voluntary workers for the untiring work expended upon it, and without which it could not possibly flourish. The reduction of the number of meetings of the Council in London from four to two annually, had not unfortunately had the hoped-for effect of improving attendance from branches, a fact to be explained by higher travel and attendant costs. Mr. Greaves also warmly advocated the proposal that branches in the United Kingdom should each now instigate a fund from which at least one delegate

could be sent to Conference annually. He rightly argued that the Fellowship would derive nothing but strength from such a scheme. Mr. Greaves concluded with a reference to *The Dickensian*, with a plea for further and widespread support.

Mr. E. J. Mitchell followed with the Hon. Treasurer's Report to Conference, opening with a tribute to the valuable and expeditious work of the Hon. Auditors, Messrs. Morris, Gregory & Co. of Manchester.

Dealing first with *The Dickensian*, there was an excess of Expenditure over Income of £97 during the year as against £20 for 1951, but against that figure there was set receipts of £51 for donations received as a result of a suggestion to Council that Branches should give some voluntary assistance towards the cost of publication. This shows a net deficiency of £46, regrettable, of course, but not so large as it has been in the past.

He reported a slight increase in Fellowship expenses during 1952 as compared with 1951, but this was more than offset by a very satisfactory Increase in Income with the result that the Excess of Income over Expenditure to be transferred to Capital Account was £139, as against £102 in 1951. So that after setting off the deficiency on *The Dickensian* the balance to be carried forward on Capital Account was £930 (plus the £51 for Donations compared with £887 at the end of 1951. Mr. Mitchell continued

"During 1952 our activities towards Charitable objects have been:

	£	s.	d.
Gillingham Scout Disaster	8	18	2
Devon Flood Disaster	25	0	0
Treloar Cripples' Home	15	15	0
Bermondsey Children's Flats	5	5	0
Lord Mayor's Flood and Tempest Distress Fund	35	9	1

As regards the last item it should be mentioned that £17 6s. 11d. was raised by a production of *Scenes from Pickwick* by members of Headquarters at Crosby Hall, Chelsea.

"This being the first occasion on which we have met since the conclusion of the Jubilee year, I should report the results of the Appeal for the Walter Dexter Memorial Fund. As you know this was launched in 1944 with a Target of £5,000, increased in 1948 to £10,000 to be collected by December 31st, 1952. With the very generous assistance of the *News Chronicle*, we actually collected £10,257 10s. 3d. all of which has been invested in gilt-edged stocks, and which it is anticipated will produce over £300 each year, towards the maintenance and upkeep of the Dickens House. A wonderful effort for which all who have had any part in it deserve full praise and have the very sincere thanks of the Fellowship."

Both reports were adopted with acclamation.

Elections followed, commencing with the all-important one for the Presidency for 1953-5. The Council's nomination was the Rt. Hon. the Earl Jowitt. As reported on another page, his election was unanimous and enthusiastic. The Vice-Presidents, with the addition of Professor Edgar Johnson, author of the magnificent

new biography *Charles Dickens, His Tragedy and Triumph*, were re-elected, as also were the three existing officers. Also re-elected were the Hon. Auditors, Messrs. Morris, Gregory & Co., to whose generous services warm tribute was paid.

After discussion, Rule IV, paragraph 4, which lays down that branches formed after 1927 fix their subscription to include the cost of *The Dickensian*, was rescinded. In having their recommendation accepted by Conference, the Council urge all branches of the Fellowship and all readers of the magazine to maintain, and indeed to increase, the circulation of their magazine, the solvency of which offers so many formidable difficulties in present economic conditions.

The invitation of the Portsmouth Branch for Conference to be held in that city in 1954, and that of the Blackpool Branch for the Conference in 1955, were accepted with acclamation.

The Book for Study during the season 1954-5 is to be *Nicholas Nickleby*, that for the approaching season, *Oliver Twist*, having been decided at last year's Conference, and a report on the flourishing activities of the N.W. Regional Group of Branches by Madam Cleator (Blackpool), brought the business to a close. A cordial vote of thanks to the Chairman for her capable conduct of the meeting was most warmly received and gracefully acknowledged.

* * * * *

The afternoon was occupied by visits to the ancient Chetham's Library and Hospital, the Municipal Central Library, the recently rebuilt Free Trade Hall, and the Gallery of English Costume at Platt Hall, Rusholme.

THE CONFERENCE DINNER

The Conference Dinner took place in the evening at the Grand Hotel, under the chairmanship of Mr. H. E. Evans, President of the Manchester Branch.

The Guest of Honour was Mr. Howard Spring, who proposed the Toast of the Immortal Memory of Charles Dickens. In the course of his speech, Mr. Spring commended the lack of precision which characterises the Fellowship's constitution. "We come together," he said, "because we love Charles Dickens and his works.

Never seek to tell thy love.

Love that never can be told.

"Dickens, from long observation as a newspaper reporter, was aware of the absurdities into which Societies and Associations can fall when they become over-conscious of their aims and objects. We know this from the dreadful *schemozzle* that followed Mr. Pickwick's reading of his paper entitled 'Speculations on the Source of the Hampstead Ponds, with some Observations on the Theory of Tittlebats.' . . .

"Here, then, we have ample warrant for not tying our Fellowship up in written rules. We 'knit ourselves together in a common bond of fellowship' in a Pickwickian sense, for fellowship does not need a written constitution. There are many members of the Dickens Fellowship—in this Pickwickian sense—who are not

officially associated with the organised body which has done me the honour of asking me to propose this toast. I am not so associated myself. I am a Dickensian at large, and if I speak for anyone but myself, it is for Dickensians at large that I do so.

"Just as it is, to me, always fascinating to go back to the scene we have just been looking at—this moment when 'Mr. Samuel Pickwick burst like another sun from his slumbers'—and no less fascinating—indeed, even more so—to go back to a contemplation of that handsome, over-worked young man, harassed by ill-health and family worries, writing from his rooms in Furnival's Inn to Messrs. Chapman and Hall: 'Dear Sirs, Pickwick is at length begun in all his might and glory'—ah, what might and glory, not only of Pickwick, was beginning there!—as, I say, I find these early glimpses fascinating, no less so I find a glimpse of myself in process of becoming a Dickensian.

"How old I was I do not know, but I know that I was a child, entrusted with the care of two other children. I was entrusted also with the care of a machine known as a mail-cart. It is many years since I have seen a mail-cart; no one of the present generation, I imagine, has ever seen one. A mail-cart was a flat structure in which two children could sit, back to back, with a board dividing them. It was on wheels and was furnished with a pair of long shafts. You could take up these shafts and push, facing the infantile cargo, or you could pull, with your back to them. I preferred to pull, believing this to be nearer to the technique of a rickshaw-boy. Trotting like a pony, I have pulled that mail-cart for scores of miles, commanded by my mother: 'Take the children out, and *keep* them out till tea-time.' Trotting in this fashion, on this memorable Dickensian day, I arrived at the park in our suburb. It was spring time, and the flowering cherries were out; the sky was blue; and on the tennis courts the season's play had started. It had nothing to do with the Centre Court at Wimbledon. Young ladies with large flowered hats and lawn-sweeping skirts, segmented like wasps by the stricture of belts round their waists, batted the balls languidly to young men who come back, in memory, clad with the archaic distinction of Victoria's last years. A cursory examination having assured me that the mail-cart still contained two babies, I sat on my favourite seat near the courts, first extracting from under the behind of one of the passengers the volume that cannot have made the journey more comfortable. It was *The Swiss Family Robinson*. Like all our books, it had come to us second-hand—price, probably, twopence. Whoever had owned it before us had been of an excessively devout disposition. The Pastor in the book had a habit of exclaiming 'Heavens!' or 'Oh, Heavens!' whenever he was at all put out; and this blasphemous imprecation had seemed so shocking that a pen full of heavy sepia ink had scored out 'Heavens!' every time. So, if the book read: 'Oh, Heavens!' said the Pastor,' I was permitted to read 'Oh, said the Pastor,' and if it had read 'Heavens, said the Pastor,' there was nothing for it but a sort of mental belch, 'said the Pastor.'

"However, this was in no way disturbing. I was so accustomed to doing without things, that I could not fail to be fascinated by

a story that gave me the joint exhilaration of a desert island and abundant goods. The Pastor's wife had but to murmur something about a lunch-time shortage and he could swim out to the wreck and return with a Westphalia ham. His son had but to mention transport difficulties and he would roam the island in search of a solution, and return inevitably with a wild ass, not the less satisfying for being called an onagra.

"Well, with the cargo of the mail-cart left to fend for itself, with the spring trees all pink and white, and suggestive murmurs of 'Love all' coming from the courts, there I sat, reading; and, presently there came and sat beside me a stout old gentleman with a red face and white hair. For a time he said nothing; then he said: 'What are you reading, boy?' I handed him my book. He looked at it, apparently with dislike; then handed it back. He got up. 'Read Dickens, boy. Read Dickens,' he commanded, and stumped heavily away.

"That was the first time I heard the name of the man whose Immortal Memory we are here to honour. It was a good time to hear it, and a good way to hear it: the spring of the year and the spring of my life, and the great name coming not as a command from a schoolmaster but as a friendly tip from a queer old codger whose name could well have been Wardle. I came to the books pretty soon after that, so that Dickens has been the only novelist, whether English or foreign, who has been a lifetime's companion. There are others for whom, in their various ways, I have almost as deep a reverence as for him; but he alone holds in my regard this unique position of having been there all the time.

"And since this is no examination of Dickens's place as a novelist, since it has no pretence at all except to be a few scattered recollections of a Dickensian's progress, let me go on to tell you how the incomparable magic worked. Soon after my encounter in the park, I was with a boy I knew and he said to me: 'I've got a book by Charles Dickens.' There was the name again! And since everything concerned with getting to know Dickens is very bright where much else is dark, I remember that this boy's name was Luther Rees and that his father was a railway signalman. He lent me his book. It was *Oliver Twist*, and when I had read it I was done for. I was a Dickensian—a member, unenrolled but never to be ejected, of the world-wide Dickens Fellowship.

"A subsequent stage in this Dickensian's Progress was inevitable. Like all the best converts, he became a missionary. Reading aloud in the family circle is now, I fear, a practice as rare as hunting the snark. Then it was common. In our house it had, as long as I could remember, been as much a part of daily life as washing behind the ears at the kitchen sink. So there was nothing strange in my introducing Dickens to the family reading circle. It was an occupation for Sunday nights. There was a time when we read aloud on many nights, but now, what with work in the daytime and classes on most nights, we were reduced to the Sunday oasis. How bright the oases were after the slogging trek through the week! We gathered round the kitchen fire, and one would read till his throat was hoarse and then pass the book

on to another. And here, looking back, I see a light on the universality of Dickens. The people in that family were a mixed bunch, with varying accomplishments and differing aspirations. But they all enjoyed the novels of Dickens, my mother not least. She herself was no reader; she had known no life but one of grinding toil; but she was as eager as a girl for the tale to go on when Sunday night came round. I cannot think of any other author to whom she could have given that whole-hearted devotion. I should not have liked to read Thackeray to her, or Scott, and as for Meredith, whom I had just, rather precociously, discovered, she would certainly have made no polite pretences of liking or even understanding. But she absorbed Dickens. There is no other word for it. In the midst of her daily work I have seen her pause and say 'That Heep!' or 'That Quilp!' as though the yeast of the story were still working in her, and she simply couldn't get over it. I do not know any other English novelist who has this power so *universally*, so that, from people of critical insight down to the simple lovers of a tale, the Dickens Fellowship is for ever drawing its registered and unregistered recruits.

"And so, you see, when you did me what, I assure you, I esteem the great honour of entrusting this toast to me, you at any rate came to one who can speak out from the inmost recesses of his heart. Dickens is not only, as I have said, the novelist who has been with one all the time, as no other has: he is also the novelist whose genius burned on my childhood's hearth, throwing out sparks, and flames, and gentle warmth in which we drew closer together, giving us all a focus of imagination and shared joy, which is something very precious to remember as year follows year and those who sat with me around that fireside one by one blow out their lamps and turn their dark corners.

"Ladies and gentlemen: forgive me if this has been not so much about Dickens as about me and Dickens. I know of no better way to pay a tribute than to say out of what personal and particular obligation the tribute is due. I wanted to make it clear that when I speak of Dickens I speak of a friend, so close that at times I could almost stretch out my hand and feel his fingers close upon it. This city knew him. He was here in happy moments of his life and in moments when great personal perplexities were closing round him.

"Our fathers could have looked upon his changeful animated face. For us remains his Immortal Memory. With pride in my task, I ask you to drink to it."

His Honour Judge F. R. Batt, in proposing the toast of The Dickens Fellowship, spoke of the love of humanity, *the charity*, to be found in Dickens, and other great writers of the past, but which is so conspicuously lacking in modern novelists. Miss Marion Pool, Chairman of Council, replied.

Mr. R. C. D. Shuckburgh proposed the Toast of the City of Manchester in an interesting speech, in the course of which he dealt with the many Dickensian associations of the city. The Lord Mayor of Manchester, Alderman A. Moss, replied. Most visitors to Manchester were, he said, "materially minded." Certainly the city was made for toil and labour, but, he continued,

"London must exist." Nevertheless, Manchester had much of cultural value to offer the visitor.

"Our Guests" was the subject of a Toast proposed by Mr. S. A. Gradwell, J.P., in her reply to which, Mrs. C. H. Young, Hon. Secretary of the Brisbane Branch, spoke of the pleasure her visit to Manchester, and to England, was giving her.

Mr. John Greaves, Hon. Secretary of the Dickens Fellowship, proposing the Toast of the Manchester Branch, paid tribute to the organisers of the present highly successful Conference, and recalled that Mr. B. W. Matz, the founder of the Fellowship, had performed this office at the first Conference in 1906. The response on behalf of the Branch was made by its indefatigable President, Mr. H. E. Evans.

A great many of the visitors attended service at St. Ann's Church on Sunday morning. After lunch came a delightful coach tour through Derbyshire to Buxton, where tea was taken. At the Grand Hotel in the evening, members gathered informally, and joined in the celebration of the Golden Jubilee of the Manchester Branch. The occasion was marked by the appearance of a wonderful Jubilee Cake, in the form of a crowned book, the work of Miss Marjorie Elkington. The fifty candles were nobly extinguished, and the cake cut, by Mrs. H. E. Evans, who rounded off the occasion with a charming speech.

Monday was occupied by a fine coach tour to Haworth, where the Church and the Brontë Parsonage were visited, to Gisburn, where lunch was taken, and on to Hoghton Tower, which held the visitors entranced for an hour or more. It is no longer the ruin described by Dickens in *George Silverman's Explanation*: magnificently restored, it is now the residence of Sir Cuthbert de Hoghton and is as fine a mansion as any in the North of England. Another wonderful old house, but of a very different character, was visited next, the half-timbered Samlesbury Hall. Tea was taken here, and again the visitors found difficulty in dragging themselves away from its beauty.

The evening found everyone again gathered at the Grand Hotel, the guests of the Manchester Branch, for the final function. Dancing was interrupted to allow Mr. John Greaves, Hon. Secretary of the Fellowship, to express the gratitude of everyone to the Manchester Branch and especially to those of its members who had worked so hard and so successfully in organising the Conference. Mr. H. E. Evans, President, replied, and called upon three members, who were largely responsible for the Conference arrangements to say a few words—Mr. S. A. Gradwell, Mr. George Mackrell, Hon. Treasurer, and Miss Marion Pool, Hon. Secretary. Of the many others who helped, certainly mention should be made here of the President himself, who played a great part in bringing the plans to such happy fruition.

The following morning saw the party scattered, taking with them the pleasure that Dickens acknowledged that he never left Manchester without. Contrary to the false fears of the southerners the weather played its part; except for a brief thunderstorm on Monday afternoon, Manchester and its beautiful countryside was bathed in warm sunshine the whole weekend.

DICKENS'S QUARREL WITH JOHN A. OVERS¹

BY GERALD G. GRUBB

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THE story of Dickens's interest in the development of John A. Overs, the literary carpenter, author of *Evenings of a Working Man*, of his sponsorship of Overs's book, of his promotion of a fund for the welfare of the carpenter's family after the carpenter's death has been told in divers places. However, the story of the quarrel between them over a letter written by Overs to William Charles Macready, the great English actor, has not been told; for Dickens's side of the correspondence pertaining to the rift is among the unpublished letters of Dickens now in the Pierpont Morgan Library.

In the spring of 1840, Overs, a consumptive, became unable to continue his labors as a carpenter. Sometime in April, apparently, of that year, Overs asked Dickens to give him some employment as a copyist. Dickens replied, "I regret to say that I have no occupation for anyone, such as you describe, I never copy, correct but little, and invariably as I write."²

On August 21st, 1841, Overs was sent by Dickens to Dr. John Elliotson, who pronounced him unable to do any sort of muscular work.³ At the same time Dickens recommended Overs to William Charles Macready, who was in the process of reopening the Drury Lane Theatre, for light employment.⁴ He wrote: "Among the men I have an interest in, and help a little in their struggles through this workaday world, is one—Mr. Overs high—a poor cabinet maker, who in the intervals of his work has taught himself for many years to think and feel like a man, and has written some pretty ballads and good little prose sketches—of which latter commodity I am happy to say I have just got Cruikshank to take a sample for his omnibus.

"Now this cabinet maker (he is foreman to a manufacturer of medicine-chests, at some thirty shillings a week wages) has a chronic affection of the pleura—but now discovered—which the doctors tell him will prevent his making cabinets any more inasmuch as in doing that work he is obliged to *stand* for twelve hours a day at least—which they say wont do. I have sent him to Elliotson this morning, and no doubt he will confirm the opinion.

"He is none of your maudlin gentry, but a straightforward, hard-working, earnest man, above his station in nothing but having read and remembered a great many good books. It has occurred to me as a possibility that you might at some time or other find you needed such a person in some capacity about the theatre—as a kind of upper messenger, or door-keeper, or in any capacity where a diligent, respectable, sober fellow, of very

¹ This study has been done with the assistance of a Carnegie Grant-in-Aid. The unpublished letters quoted in part and summarised in this study are in The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York City, and in The Berg Collection of The New York Public Library, and are incorporated with the permission of the authorities of those institutions and by permission of Mr. Henry Charles Dickens, O.B.E.

² ALS., "Devonshire Terrace, Friday Afternoon," in The Berg Collection, New York Public Library, also, published in excerpt in Walter Dexter, ed., *The Letters of Charles Dickens, The Nonesuch Dickens*, 3 vols. (London, 1938), I, 256.

³ ALS., Dickens to Overs, August 21st and August 24th, 1841, in Morgan Library.

⁴ ALS., Dickens to Macready, August 21st, 1841, in Morgan Library.

creditable appearance and manners would be a consideration. I can vouch for him most thoroughly in every respect."

Dickens gave Overs a summary of the important points in his letter of recommendation. "I told him," he wrote, "what you had been by trade—what your weekly earnings were—and how I came to know you—and I said that you were not one of the maudlin . . . who consider themselves great geniuses rejected, but that you had always worked hard until you were taken ill . . ."¹

In the same letter Dickens commented on the character of Macready and of his great esteem of Macready as a friend. "He is a most generous and high-minded man, having as great a sympathy with all struggling persons as anyone I know . . . His word is his oath, and you may rest assured he will not forget you."² It would not be necessary, Dickens thought, for either of them to make any further application to Macready. "Leave the matter as it stands," he said, "he will not require any visit from either of us." In a postscript Dickens told Overs that the actual opening of Drury Lane Theatre would be delayed until Christmas, but it was possible that he might be employed sooner.

On the same day, August 24th, 1841, Dickens wrote a note to Macready, saying, "I must thank you most heartily and cordially, for your kind note relative to poor Overs. I can't tell how glad I am to know that he deserves such kindness."³ In the second paragraph of this letter Dickens recounted for Macready's benefit the kindness of Dr. Elliotson to Overs, closing the passage with ". . . then he writes me four sides of paper about the man, and says he can't go back to his old work, for that requires muscular exertion (and muscular exertion he mustn't make). What are we to do with him?"⁴

Dickens must have had direct word or a letter from Macready giving instructions as to how Overs was to secure employment at the theatre. In writing to William Dryden, stage manager at Drury Lane, Dickens mentioned having told Overs ". . . to call on you at the theatre tomorrow, at one."⁵ It may be of importance to notice in this letter that Dickens was not sure whether to send Overs to the theatre or to Dryden's house, for later it will appear that Overs resented the number of trips he had to make before finding Dryden at home.

Sometime just before October 14th, 1841, Overs went to work at Drury Lane Theatre. Dickens, writing from his couch on that date, having not yet recovered from his recent painful operation, said, ". . . I should be glad to hear what has passed between you and Mr. Macready . . . that gentleman comes to me every day but I think it better not to ask him . . ."⁶

Perhaps, Dickens had heard rumors that all was not well with Overs in his employment at Macready's theatre; again, perhaps, it was Dickens's inquiry that led Overs to forward the novelist a letter which he had written to Macready, the contents of which very nearly wrecked Dickens's friendship for Overs.

¹ ALS., Dickens to Overs, August 21st and 24th 1841, in Morgan Library.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Nonesuch Dickens, Letters*, I, 347.

⁴ *Ibid.*, I, 347.

⁵ ALS., Dickens to Dryden, "Devonshire Terrace, Monday [October 1841]," in Morgan Library.

⁶ *Nonesuch Dickens, Letters*, I, 358.

The exact details may never be recoverable, but the broad outlines of the quarrel that resulted can be clearly traced through Dickens's letters. On Friday night, October 22nd, 1841, Dickens wrote to Overs that he had read the latter's letter to Macready, and had had it read over to him. He disapproved of it for three reasons. First, he considered it "... rather inconsiderate to address three sides of foolscap, on such a subject, to a gentleman who receives three or four score letters a day," and whose time was fully occupied. Second, he thought that Overs vaunted his independence of mind too much and "rather unnecessarily in the eyes of a stranger, who might be apt to think . . . that a stream so very noisy is not very deep." Then Dickens touched more directly upon the contents of Overs's letter, saying:

"In the third place, I consider—even I—that the whole of that paragraph about the wives and children, and the wet and cold, is presumptuous and impertinent. You have no right to constitute yourself a judge of the regulations which Mr. Macready—for the security of his property, and the comfort of those about him when the theatre is open—sees fit to establish. That they are contrary to the customs of a place, bankrupt for many years—the lounge of vagabonds—and chosen resort of the worst hangers-on to the very worst haunts—is extremely possible. I hope they are or Mr. Macready would not be the friend of mine he is."¹

Dickens further told Overs that, the next day being Saturday, nothing was easier than for him to tell Dryden "that the post did not suit" him, and that he "wished to leave the theatre as soon as" his "services can be dispensed with."²

Dickens recognised in every person the right to better his lot, and made it clear that he had no quarrel with Overs for leaving his situation; "but I do not hesitate," he said, "to tell you that your letter is in execrable taste, and not at all becoming." He always tried to determine, he said, what people *think* when they talked to him, and that after a recent conversation with Overs, it was plain to him that the carpenter would not stay with the theatre for a month. Then he touched upon the point that had wounded him, saying, "I am a little surprised at your working your ideas of Mr. Macready's character out of the wretched materials presented to your view which would be well enough in a man who could neither read nor write, but is quite beneath you."³

Oh October 27th, 1841, Dickens wrote Overs a second letter devoted entirely to the publication of the carpenter's poems. He advised him to send all of his songs to a Mr. Tait, and told him that a Mr. Cruikshank had called to inform him that certain of Overs's papers could not be published until the next month, but would be paid for immediately. Dickens pledged himself to forward the money at once upon its receipt. He said not a word about Overs's insulting letter to Macready, but significantly closed with the following paragraph: "I cannot read the inclosed, being ordered out of town in a few days, and having my attention

¹ ALS., Dickens to Overs, October 22nd, 1841, in Morgan Library.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

engaged by a severe affliction in Mrs. Dickens's family. You had better, in the future, consult your own judgment."¹

Between this letter of October 27th, 1841, and the next published letter of September 5th, 1843, there is a long gap in the correspondence broken only so far as I have been able to ascertain by two unpublished letters which are in the Pierpont Morgan Library.

About the middle of November, 1841, Overs wrote Dickens asking him why he had lost interest in him, and calling Dickens's attention to the fact that Macready had not actually received the offending letter. On November 23rd, 1841, Dickens answered Overs at great length, saying, "I will write you why the interest I had in you has undergone a change"; then he took as an example Overs's last note which "informs me," he said, "that you can much more easily imagine my having been unjust, irascible, and everything which you know I am not, than you can entertain the idea of your having committed a fault." Dickens said that in all this, and all that Overs had done since he recommended him to Macready, "You have shown a deficiency of that moral sense which I believed you to possess," that Overs had lost sight of his true position "in regard to that gentleman, and to all other gentlemen with whom" he had "come in contact."

Dickens then reminded Overs that he had been recommended to Macready as one "who was incapacitated by illness from pursuing his usual occupation," that Macready employed him as such "in the only capacity about the theatre, then unfilled, in which such a man *could* be employed," and that if he could have recommended him as an able-bodied stage carpenter, or as a scene painter in full possession of his cunning, he would have been employed as such and paid as such. Before Overs had been at Drury Lane Theatre a fortnight, he began measuring his salary with that of able-bodied employees, Dickens said. He continued:

"Further than this, you ask me how I think Mr. Macready would like your situation. You take the case of a man who by long study, liberal education, incessant application and constant self denial, combined with divers physical and mental gifts, has raised himself, slowly and in the course of years, to the summit of an art in which very few attain to excellence. You set him beside yourself, measure head to head and heel to heel—and seem to recognise no difference between the two."²

This not being enough, Overs, according to Dickens, set about lecturing Macready in a way that was "very presumptuous" upon his manner of governing his own property, "telling him plainly that your beliefs are much finer than his—and that he must get a less sensitive man to carry into effect his ogre-like commands." Overs complained to Macready "with a kind of malice prepense" because he had been compelled to go to see Mr. Dryden (the stage manager) several times before finding him at home; when Dickens himself, during the lean days of his youth, "had to call a dozen times upon a busy man, and yet bore it with Christian fortitude."

¹ ALS., Dickens to Overs, October 27th, 1841, in Morgan Library.

² ALS., Dickens to Overs, November 23rd, 1841, in Morgan Library.

Dickens said that Overs had suppressed the fact from Dr. Elliotson that he had always recognised Overs's right to quit the theatre, if the situation did not suit him, that it was Overs's manner of leaving and his reflections over that act that led him to the "conclusion that Mr. Macready and Mr. Dryden treated you with a delicacy and a consideration which you did not deserve at their hands," that it all rendered him sorry that he had ever recommended him. Finally, in concluding, Dickens wrote:

"It was not because I am anxious to defend Mr. Macready from your censures that I am warm with you; but because your conduct has disappointed me, and has shewn me that you were not the sort of man I took you for. . . Disappointment, of course, slackens my zeal to serve you: but still I entertain the desire; and I would do so, if I had the opportunity."¹

Between November 23rd and 30th, Overs wrote Dickens another letter, apparently trying to set himself right in respect to Dr. Elliotson, charging Dickens with having written that he was too morally deficient to associate with gentlemen, and intimating, if not saying out right, that Dickens expected him to assume a subservient attitude toward him and Macready. To these points Dickens replied one by one. First, he said that Dr. Elliotson had made it quite clear that Overs had spoken to him about his having left the theatre, expressing some doubt of having done right in the manner of his leaving, and showing a "want of moral courage to tell him the whole truth." "Another time," Dickens advised, "tell all, and you will find it best in the end."

On the matter of a moral deficiency which rendered Overs "unfit to associate with gentlemen," Dickens replied that he was unable to ascertain where Overs got that idea from his letter, saying, "Do you not think it possible that if I entertained any such opinion, I should have abstained from writing to you?"

On the third topic, the implication that Dickens wanted Overs to become subservient to him, he wrote a very fine paragraph that sets forth his respect for personal independence and human dignity in very clear language:

"I have no quarrel with you and want no submission from you; I hate it; have no right to exact it; and am in my nature, repugnant to it. All I want is that for your own welfare and happiness, you should submit yourself, if I may use the expression *to yourself*, and feel that you have acted foolishly. It is because I wish you to maintain a worthy independence, and because I respect that quality, that I am sad when you mistake a wrong-headed, loud-mouthed, vaunting demonstration, for a virtue which shrinks from such display, and lives in a man's heart; not upon his lips or the nib of his pen."²

After telling Overs when he could find him at home, Dickens closed his letter, and apparently the quarrel, with words appropriate to the close of this article: "Let this matter rest where it is. It has been quite enough discussed and had better be left alone for the future."

¹ ALS., Dickens to Overs, November 23rd, 1841, in Morgan Library.

² 16 ALS., Dickens to Overs, November 30th, 1841, in Morgan Library.

SHAVINGS FROM DICKENS'S WORKSHOP

Unpublished Fragments from the Novels

III. *LITTLE DORRIT*

IN the following pages will be found those passages of *Little Dorrit* deleted by the author in making up the monthly serial parts in which the novel appeared. They are taken from Dickens's original corrected proofs, and published for the first time, by permission of the Victoria and Albert Museum.—EDITOR.

AT THE INN AT CHALONS

[Bk. I. Ch. XI. Rigaud, alias Lagnier, finds himself sharing a room with Cavaletto, who says he has "thought of going to Paris, and perhaps to England."—]

"Cavaletto," said Lagnier, "You know me for a gentleman?" He returned the old reply, "Altro!" but not quite in the old way. "Cavaletto!" Monsieur Lagnier put his hand in his pocket, and pulled out his money as if the Daybreak had no claim upon it. "You shall share this. It's not much; but you shall see how soon I'll make it more. What have you got yourself?"

John Baptist, with another effort as though he would have avoided displaying his treasure, if his politeness could have found a way, showed them three times as much in various silver coins in a bag. Monsieur Legnier viewed it with a hawk's eye, and in a moment calculated the gross amount.

RIGAUD TRIES TO SLEEP

[Bk. I. Ch. XI. After the conversation had ended, John Baptist put out the candle, and then Rigaud dressed, not undressed, himself, lay down in his clothes "to get through the night."—]

Not with his former regular breathing, not in his former comfortable sleep did he lie there now, but dozing, starting, often waking, and often oppressed by such nightmare dreams of the victim of society, as could only be dissipated by his softly rising and touching him in the darkness. Two o'clock in the morning had been hammered out by the churches before he became unconscious.

MRS. CLENNAM'S OLD HOUSE

[Bk. I. Ch. XV. "The street noises . . . rushed in at the gateway in going past, and rushed out again . . . They leaped the gap in a moment, and went upon their way."—]

So disused was the spot, and so long was it since it had known repair that the whole concern seemed to be resolving itself into the city mud and dust, and showers, fogs, and winds. The outer surface of the bricks turned to powder under the hands; the

painted wood peeled off in layers; the iron of the railings was in rusty rags. The twigs broke when they were touched, and the patch of grass was little better than green mildew on the ground. What matter of worms were underneath it, Heaven knows; but those that occasionally died upon the surface were as black as the twigs, and as brittle, and assumed their forms and crumbled with them and cast their undistinguishable mites of rottenness into the general bank.

FLINTWINCH IS IMPATIENT

[Bk. I. Ch. XV. Mrs. Clennam warns Flintwinch that there is a demon of anger in him. He retorted that if there were fifty he would make them all say "None of your nonsense with me . . ." whether they liked it or not.—]

"Flintwinch, Flintwinch," she returned, "When you are calm and know what you are saying, I will talk to you." "Don't tell me I don't know what I am saying," retorted Jeremiah, "I won't take it from you. You don't want me to talk politely about demons, do you? That's not your religion, I suppose?"

She said in a pacifying way, "Oh, Flintwinch, Flintwinch!" To which the grim gentleman returned, increasing in irascibility at every clause of his reply, "O Flintwinch, Flintwinch? Why not P. Flintwinch, Flintwinch? and Q. Flintwinch, Flintwinch? and R. Flintwinch, Flintwinch? and all the way to Z? and back again from A to N? What does it matter to me?"

FLINTWINCH EXPLAINS

[Bk. I. Ch. XV. Flintwinch tells Mrs. Clennam "before you took your own part, I thought you ought to have taken the part of Arthur's father."—]

"Arthur's father can't take his own part—you can; no one is a stranger or a wiser boy. You know what Arthur's father was and in whose hands he was wax. Clear him to his sons, then I say. A woman and as still as you—but I too am good for that much. Neither you nor I want dead help. Put it away then, put it away."

"I have put it away."

"Yes, I know, you have. What I objected was that you hadn't done it at first before you called me in that day." ["Arthur's father!"]

MRS. CLENNAM'S ALLIANCE

[Bk. I. Ch. XV. Descrying . . . "force of character in Mr. Flintwinch, perhaps Mrs. Clennam had deemed alliance with him worth her while."—]

"So I keep certain fancies of my own, and hold fast to 'em," said the crabbed Flintwinch. "Out of that comes this surprising determination of mine respecting Arthur's father. It's not that I particularly care about his money—I think. It's not that I

particularly call to mind the comings and goings between you two that I have had on hand in this house—I think. It's not that I greatly trouble myself to remember what a life of punishment he led—I think; to the best of my knowledge, it's because I make a point of it."

MRS. CLENNAM EXPLAINS TO FLINTWINCH

[Bk. I. Ch. XV. Affery, listening to this angry conversation, had fled, fearing to be discovered, but returned to her post "and once more cowered behind the door."—]

"Yes," Mrs. Clennam was then saying, "much as it may surprise you, I do care for him, and his opinion is not indifferent to me." Jeremiah observed, Oh! he would hardly have thought it.

"Perhaps so," she returned. "It may be a part of the endurances with which I am rightly visited, though few are disposed to give me credit for such feelings."

"Why, you see, you don't show 'em," said Flintwinch sourly.

"No, I was driven back into myself too long ago." She fell into a moody silence for a while and then said, "Neither does he show such feelings towards me."

"So much the better," returned Flintwinch. "Though I don't know what you'd have him do, under the circumstances."

"Hasn't he left me?" she asked, with that momentary fierceness upon her. "Didn't he abandon me in the hour of his return?"

"And if he hadn't what would you have done?" retorted Flintwinch, stroking his chin with great composure—his wife knew he was doing it, though she couldn't see him. "If he hadn't abandoned you in the hour of his return but had kept by you and wouldn't be blindfolded, what would you have done with him?"

"I don't repine," said she. "Oh Lord forbid!"

Herefrom Mr. Flintwinch laughed a most irreverent laugh and saying with a chuckle, "No, no," jogged about the room again.

FANNY'S SPIRIT, AND AMY'S

[Bk. I. Ch. XX. "I was not born where you were," Fanny tells Little Dorrit, "and perhaps that makes a difference."—]

"My spirit is not quite so subdued to it, as yours is—never was. You can bear what I couldn't possibly bear. You can let the wretchedest little being make up to you. I couldn't do that, Amy. I couldn't do it, and I wonder you can."

Even the patient Little Dorrit thought this rather hard, under the circumstances; but she only said, "Don't be unkind, Fanny, without meaning it: Tell me about yourself instead."

THE SHADOW OF THE MARSHALSEA WALL

[Bk. I. Ch. XX. Little Dorrit is troubled by the interview between her sister Fanny and Mrs. Merdle at which she had been present. Returning to the Marshalsea she finds the "shadow of the Wall was on every object." The chapter was to have ended with—]

And yet the shadow of the wall seemed to pass away before the light of her coming, as she made the old grey figure ruddy with the awakened fire, and said in her voice of quiet cheerfulness, bending over it bare-headed:

"Did you think I was lost father?"

MERDLIE AND THE DOCTOR

[Bk. I. Ch. XXI. "Pray come to me to-morrow, or let me come to you."—]

"I should have done so to-day, but that I really don't think you do me any good. I don't suppose the failure to be with you; I know that if anybody could do me good, you could; but I believe nobody can."

"Tut," returned the Doctor. "Many patients say that; it belongs to their cases. Let me see you to-morrow, Mr. Merdle."

LITTLE DORRIT UNDERSTANDS

[Bk. I. Ch. XXII. Old William Dorrit privately did not appreciate Mr. Clennam's visits to the Marshalsea. The first paragraph of the chapter was to have been followed thus—]

Clennam, for his part, only remembered his promise to Little Dorrit and kept it. His interest in her; his sympathy was with her; and what he did or abstained from doing in this association, was for her. He came to the Marshalsea from time to time, to keep before her the silent assurance of his friendship. She understood that, and gratefully showed him so in her eyes.

MRS. CHIVERY ON HER SON'S AFFECTIONS

[Bk. I. Ch. XXII. Clennam asks, "What is your version of the matter?" but originally he asked for John's. His mother replied—]

"His account?" repeated Mrs. Clennam, "Our John's? No, sir, no, you little know him. To ask him, for his account would not be, I think, to make it over pleasant to the next customer that might want a shillings-worth of Cuban, Bengal, or Havanah, and pick 'em out himself. He's much too honourable besides."

MRS. CLENNAM EXPLAINS

[Bk. I. Ch. XXX. "As she spoke these words she put her hand upon the watch . . . looking at it steadily and half defiantly."—]

It was 'almost as if she had said: "I court remembrance of the debts of my soul, and strike my payments off, taking credit for every hour's enforced endurance here, and for every profession I make, and sacrifice—of other people—that I offer up, according to my doctrine."

BLANDOIS FAILS TO TAKE A HINT

[Bk. II. Ch. VII. Mrs. Gowan, wanting a private talk with Little Dorrit, "rose to depart."—]

"I had hoped," she said, "that I might have sat with you a little while when you had no visitors; but I know how difficult that is, your circle of acquaintances being so very comprehensive."

"Being so very comprehensive," repeated Blandois with a bow. Her eyes had slightly turned towards him, as if she would have said "I wonder it should comprehend this man," and he had spoken and bowed immediately. "Being," he now said again, rendering his softest homage to the Dorrit hospitality, "so very comprehensive."

CLOSING IN

[Bk. II. Ch. XXX. Following the opening description of sunset in the city, was to have come this second paragraph—]

As in the country the dewey freshness of morning changed to the dusty heat of noon, and then again softened into the sweet-scented quiet of evening; so in the town the silence of the streets swelled into a turbulent roar, subsiding, as the hours ran out, into a milder hum of rest and respite. As the windmill in the rural landscape ceased to turn when its shadow was long and soft upon the ground, so the human grinding of the city slackened when the long bright bars again stretched over it and were flushed with red.

MRS. CLENNAM'S VISITORS

[Bk. II. Ch. XXX. Rigaud, accompanied by Baptist and Pancks, arrived at Mrs. Clennam's old house, and knocked loudly. "Jeremiah Flintwinch opened the door,"—]

"By the thunder and the lightning!" said Rigaud, "I thought *you* had disappeared, my Flintwinch!"

"Not at all," returned the waspish Jeremiah.

"You have been a long time coming."

"Not at all," repeated Jeremiah.

"Let pass these two," said Rigaud. "Follow, fellows!" Mr. Flintwinch offered no objection, and they all clanked into the stone hall. When he had closed the door, Mr. Flintwinch scraped his chin, and aggravatingly stood before them as dry and speechless as the oldest of mummies.

"Now!" said Rigaud, "Show the way. Take the lead."

"What may you want next?" asked Mr. Flintwinch coolly.

"Will you explain your wishes?"

FLINTWINCH AMUSES RIGAUD

[Bk. II. Ch. XXX. The three visitors having entered Mrs. Clennam's room, that lady demands "What do these people want here?"—]

"Faith, madame," returned Rigaud, "our Flintwinch is so brusque in his reception of a gentleman, that unless it was a part of my character to be chivalrous towards your sex, I should take offence and decline all conversation."

"Will you never govern that irascible disposition, Flintwinch?" she demanded in a low voice.

"No, I won't," said Mr. Flintwinch, "So you needn't ask *that* question any more."

Jeremiah's curt reply afforded Rigaud such vast entertainment that it smoothed his ruffled temper. He laughed long and loudly, and would indeed have embraced his dry friend as a mark of complete reconciliation, but for Jeremiah's modestly dodging behind the sofa to avoid the compliment.

"For the love of that droll Flintwinch," exclaimed Rigaud, "all is forgotten, all is pardoned. That comic Flintwinch! That spiritual little dog! Let us return."

PANCKS IS MYSTERIOUS

[Bk. II. Ch. XXX. Speculating on what Mr. Clennam would say "if he was here."—]

He spoke so very emphatically, and his pause at this point was so very special, and he snorted as the company with such a very significant intimation of having something curious in reserve. that Mrs. Clennam, meeting his eyes as they looked from one to another, inquired: "What would he say?"

"He would say, Ma'am," answered [Pancks, taking one step aside towards the window's seat . . .]

A POINT AGREED

[Bk. II. Ch. XXX. Rigaud demands payment, and Jeremiah "told the amount into his hand."—]

"And you wish it was poison, that could get into my blood this way; don't you?" said Rigaud, chinking it.

"It wouldn't," returned Jeremiah, "be good manners to contradict you."

MRS. CLENNAM'S COMPOSURE

[Bk. II. Ch. XXX. Rigaud, chinking the money in his hand, suddenly turned to Mrs. Clennam "as if he were going to strike her with it."—]

But she had not nerved herself with so little determination that any bluster could disturb a line of her fixed face. Her manner of speaking was a fine as usual, and expressed nothing more extraordinary than that she had very carefully considered what she said.

AFFERY'S DREAM

[Bk. II. Ch. XXX. Affery recounts a dream. "Rigaud had not lost a word of this."—]

Though he had not looked at Affery; for, all this time Mrs. Clennam looked at him as she had from the beginning, and Jeremiah Flintwinch looked at her, and she was observant of them both.

BLEAK HOUSE SCENE

By MALCOLM MORLEY

MONTHLY numbers of *Bleak House* began to appear in March 1852 and nineteen issues completed the famous story by September 1853. But before its conclusion a drama taken from the early chapters was produced at the Pavilion Theatre in the Whitechapel Road on June 4th, 1853. James W. Elphinstone and Frederick Neale, joint managers of the theatre, were responsible for the dramatisation which had for title *Bleak House; or, The Wandering Spirit of the Ghost Walk*. Joe was the principal character and the play chiefly concerned with the sorrows of the poor crossing-sweeper played by S. Sawford, the leading man *pro tem* at the pavilion. Like most leading men of the period Sawford was versed in the classics and had appeared as Richard III, Iago, and Sir Giles Overreach. The first *Bleak House* adaptation would seem to be going the rounds that year for it was given on July 4th at the Marylebone where Joe was personated by Tom Mead, then playing a number of Shakespearean leads at the theatre. By way of a change from Othello and Macbeth, he appeared on alternate evenings in the rags of the lonely waif. Mead was one of the best of the second-rate stars, a virile individual of good presence and voice.

A month earlier than the Marylebone production, a version of *Bleak House* had been given at the City of London on June 6th. It was an arrangement by John H. Wilkins, dramatist in ordinary to that theatre. Joe was portrayed by Marian Lacey, the first actress to undertake the rôle. The City of London was under the direction of William Searle, an actor who had leased the theatre for a Summer Season, and in his company were two of the most prolific adapters for the stage of contemporary stories, notably those in that depository of pathos and bathos, the *London Journal*. Though they concocted dramas from anything in sight, neither William Travers nor Colin Henry Hazlewood made any great attack on the works of Dickens. They found their material in the novelettes which later came to be known as Shilling Shockers.

The next adaptation of the novel on the stage was *Bleak House; or, the Ghost Walk*, at the Strand, then under the management of F. W. Allcroft. This little playhouse (which had nothing to do with the similarly named building of to-day) went from Lessee to Lessee, but, despite its change of owners, rarely did the establishment fail to put on a version of a Boz story as soon as one appeared in whole, or in parts. The anonymous adaptation given here on May 29th, 1854, had fifteen scenes in its two acts, beginning with the Exterior of Krook's House and ending with Potter's Burial Ground as it was called on the playbill. Jo (or Joe) was played by Fanny Beaumont, and Inspector Bucket, an early, if not the earliest of fictional detectives, was acted by H. Butler. Sir Leicester Dedlock fell to Meagreson while Hortense went to the beautiful Georgina Hodson whose father at one time played the fiddle at the Bower Saloon. The Hodson family grew much in power at this house of entertainment in Stangate and it was here that the *Bleak House* drama from the Strand, with the changed sub-title of *The Adventures of Joe the Crossing-Sweeper*,

was given the following September 2nd. Lydia Pearce was seen as Poor Joey, as the character was now described. It was a double bill of Dickens that night at the Bower, the other piece being F. Fox Cooper's dramatisation of *Hard Times*, also performed previously at the Strand.

An orphan hero, forlorn and rejected, was no novelty in melodrama and, as often as not, the name of Joe was attached to him. Long before *Bleak House* was written, or conceived, in 1846 to be exact, there was a play of American origin, *Joe the Orphan*, at the Marylebone where the title rôle was enacted by the comedian Thomas Lee. Did Dickens dip into the stockpot of melodrama for his waif character of Joe, a character he humanised in his own masterly manner? The line of orphans in the theatre has been long. Some of them have graced plays wrongly listed by the chroniclers as adaptations from *Bleak House*. *Outcast Joe; or, The London Arab*, by W. R. Waldron at the Garrick in 1871 had nothing to do with Dickens although credited as a dramatisation. Neither had *Poor Joe of Horsemonger Lane* at the City of London, nor *The London Arab* at the Grecian.

Although the part of Joe appealed to both actors and actresses, oddly enough the character was absent from the first adaptation in America. Errant John Brougham, so successful with his adaptations of *Dombey and Son* and *David Copperfield*, supplied the Lyceum, New York, with *Bleak House* on October 13th, 1853. It was the theatre he had built and opened only a few years before, but the worries of management had been too much for him. His volatile, care-free nature could not be brought to grapple with burdensome details and he resigned in favour of James Wallack the Elder, ever ready to run a theatre. Hence Brougham's Lyceum became Wallack's Lyceum. In his version of *Bleak House*, John was seen there as Turveydrop and his wife, Mrs. Brougham, as Hortense. Two noted players were in the cast, Laura Keane who played Lady Dedlock and Lester Wallack who was cast for the Debilitated Cousin. Lester, son of the Elder James in command, was soon to be recognised as the foremost romantic actor of his time in New York. The play did reasonably well and was performed in other cities of the United States. There came a lull. *Bleak House* virtually vanished from the stage in Britain and America for nearly twenty years.

At Booth's Theatre, New York, on February 23rd, 1874, was produced *Chesney Wold*, a dramatisation of the novel by an unrecorded scribe. written as a vehicle for the Bohemian actress, Fanny Janauschek, who doubled the parts of Lady Dedlock and Hortense. Acclaimed a great tragedienne in Germany, she had arrived in the United States to continue her career. Her full name was Francesca Romana Magdalena Janauschek and, with her grand and gracious manner, she may be said to have lived up to it in private life. During her first years in America Madame Janauschek acted in German, playing Lady Macbeth in that language to the Macbeth of Edwin Booth in English, one of those polyglot performances encountered from time to time in the theatre. Despite a guttural accent, she spoke English with a scholarly precision, when, having acquired the language, she

ventured to act in it. Her methods were bold and broad. Highly dramatic, perhaps over-dramatic, *Chesney Wold* provided her with strongly contrasting opportunities. Lady Dedlock, guarding the secret of her child's birth and overcome with remorse, was in strong contrast to Hortense, the malicious maid who falsely accuses her of murder. The play ended with the death of Lady Dedlock in a powerful acting scene for Janaushek. A suggestion of the modern thriller was provided by the element of mystery together with the tracking down of the truth by Inspector Bucket, a part assigned to Joseph Wheelock. Joe, who had little to do, was played by Rachael Noah. In the cast were Charles Walcot, Jr., as Sir Leicester, Milnes Lavick as Tulkinghorn and Robert Pateman as Guppy. *Chesney Wold* (sometimes billed as *Bleak House*) long remained in Madame Janaushek's repertoire. As a travelling star she was seen in the piece throughout the United States and Canada. It proved more popular than any of the translations of German stage classics in which she generally acted.

In the course of her theatrical wanderings Janaushek visited San Francisco and played her two parts in *Chesney Wold* at the California Theatre on June 7th, 1875. In the supporting stock company at that theatre was a young English actress, Jennie Lee, who played Joe. Despite the fact that the part was confined to three short scenes, this young actress, much to the annoyance of the star, made a decided hit as the waif. Madame was jealous. She openly conveyed her displeasure but Jennie found a friend in Dion Boucicault, then in San Francisco rehearsing for a production of his play *The Shaughran*. After seeing her performance he said to her "Tell that man of yours," meaning Jennie's husband J. P. Burnett, "to take the book of *Bleak House* and write a play making Jo the part, and you'll never want a penny and you can play Jo until you're seventy, if you don't get too fat." They were prophetic words.

Burnett deliberated slowly: Jennie coaxed and coaxed him to the task. The play was eventually written and husband and wife proceeded to New York. No manager would consider staging the piece. It was the same when they reached London the next year. Jennie had, perforce, to accept an engagement as principal boy in the forthcoming pantomime of *Jack the Giant Killer* at the Surrey. No sooner settled than W. Sidney of the Prince of Wales's, Liverpool, offered them a week for their play and "Jo," as it was named, had its world première at that theatre on November 8th, 1875. Jennie Lee played Jo supported by the resident company and with Sidney as Bucket. Business was immense. The success could not be followed up immediately because she had to rehearse for the pantomime at the Surrey and this entertainment duly appeared on Boxing Night. From all accounts Jennie was a delightful Jack but her mind was set upon Jo. With the intention of renting a London theatre she saved every penny she could from her salary. Unexpectedly came an opportunity of renting the Globe which had a few weeks vacant pending the production of Wilkie Collins's *Miss Gwilt*. With a bare thousand pounds, all she and Burnett had in the world, Jennie Lee

went into partnership with Edgar Bruce and leased the empty playhouse. Fortunately she was able to hand over her rôle in the pantomime to Nellie Power and so give all her time and attention to the venture. The first night of *Jo* at the Globe took place on February 21st, 1876, and for something like a quarter of a century *Jennie Lee as Jo* was familiar theatrical billing the world over. Dion Boucicault's words proved to be correct.

The so-called "little pimple of an actress" scored a great triumph. There was a moving realism in her picture of the hunted boy long remembered by playgoers of more than one generation. The drama was almost entirely devoted to *Jo* and Jennie's performance was faithful to Dickens. Other characters in the drama, particularly the men, were in the nature of caricatures in respectful attendance; the limelight was all on *Jo*. Burnett, the adapter, stood for Inspector Bucket, Edward Price for Sir Leicester, J. P. Flockton for Tulkinghorn, Charles Wilmot for Chadband and Charles Steyne for Mr. Guppy. Louise Hibbert appeared as Lady Dedlock and Dolores Drummond, making her London debut, scored as Hortense, a part where the overtones proved extremely effective in performance. When the Globe was given over to *Miss Gwilt* at Easter, *Jo* was transferred, lock, stock and barrel, to the theatre in the Westminster Aquarium.

The success of Jennie Lee in *Jo* encouraged numerous other versions of the novel. In the wake of her first production descended an avalanche of dramas dealing with the joys and sorrows, mostly sorrows, of the little crossing-sweeper. Never at one time were so many plays based on the same Dickens's story being performed. Actresses of the mould of Jennie Lee, and some not, secured adaptations for their own particular use. The law of copyright was powerless to prevent them doing so. Leading actors also appeared as *Jo*. In *Bleak House* by George Lander at the Pavilion on March 25th, 1876, the exponent was J. B. Howe, a little man with a loud voice and to the stage-manner born. Approaching fifty, as he was, it could not have been considered a matter of type-casting. Many well-known melodramatic players were in the piece; George Yeates as Tulkinghorn, F. Thomas as Bucket, Morrison as Sir Leicester and Harriett Clifton as Hortense. Arthur Williams, the comedian who had played Trotty Veck at the theatre some time before, was Mr. Guppy.

On April 8th following, the Lander version travelled across the Thames to the Elephant and Castle Theatre where it was staged with the stock company plus Katie Logan specially engaged for *Jo*. She was to go to the Marylebone when the play, renamed *Poor Jo*, was produced there "with spectral effects" by J. A. Cave. Bucket was played by Charles Sennett and Esther by Jessie Garrett. Cave of the Marylebone was nothing if not enterprising. When Jennie Lee left the Globe for the Aquarium she had arranged to return to the former house with *Jo* on September 11th. However, before that date the theatre became empty owing to the unexpected closure of Wilkie Collins's drama. Francis Fairlie, the manager, advertised for a tenant to take over the intervening weeks and Cave replied. He jumped at the opportunity of anticipating Jennie Lee, rented the Globe and announced *Poor*

Jo there for August 19th. At the same time *Jo* was being announced by Jennie's partner Edgar Bruce, for the following month. Two plays on the same subject at the same theatre were being advertised side by side. Bruce was kept busy writing indignant letters to the press complaining about Cave's behaviour



Jennie Lee as Jo

By courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

while Cave, on his side, was equally busy penning epistles defending his action. It was a veritable storm in a theatrical tea-cup.

In Cave's production of Lander's drama at the Globe, Jessie Garrett, a permanent member of the Marylebone stock company, replaced Katie Logan as *Jo*, the latter having gone into the provinces to be starred in the title rôle. After the necessarily limited run of *Poor Jo* came the return of *Jo* on September 11th. Jennie Lee was back. The play remained at the theatre until November 25th. Later Jennie went on tour. She visited America

again and played *Jo* at the Fourteenth Street Theatre, New York, on August 29th, 1881. From New York she went to other cities on the American continent and on November 7th of that year reached San Francisco. Here at the Baldwin Theatre she was the star in *Jo* supported by the resident stock company. Her status was very different from the days of Janauschek.

Back in London Jennie Lee revived *Jo* at the Strand on February 18th, 1885, then once more went on the road. She journeyed to the far corners of the earth with the play: to Africa, India, China and Australia. Returned from the Antipodes, Jennie went to Drury Lane where *Jo* was given on May 13th, 1896. She and Kate Lee, who played Guster, were the only original members of the cast at the Globe twenty years previously. Sir Leicester was played by Rudge Harding, Chadband by Robb Harwood, Lady Dedlock by Alma Stanley and Hortense by Ada Lee. The new Inspector Bucket was Frank McVickers. A claim was made that the actual gate of Tom-all-Alone's was used on the stage of Drury Lane in this revival, the last occasion when the full length play was seen in the West End of London. The past was echoed at the Lyric Theatre on February 7th, 1921, at a matinée performance on behalf of the Charles Dickens Children's Library, Johnson Street, Somers Town. Some scenes from the old play were included. The actress who played *Jo* was——Jennie Lee. At the age of eighty-four she died on May 3rd, 1930.

Among the female players who acted *Jo* in various adaptations which came out soon after Jennie Lee's initial performance in the rôle were Clara Dillon in *Joe the Waif* by Herbert Rhoys at the Greenwich Theatre, April 24th, 1876, and also in *The Life and Death of Jo*, by Edward Price (the actor who three months earlier had played Sir Leicester at the Globe) at the Theatre Royal, Coventry, May 15th, 1876. She was the daughter of the famous Charles Dillon. The list continues with Eliza Thorne in her own version at the Theatre Royal, Coventry, May 15th, 1876; Julia Summers in *Jo* by Frederick Hazleton at the Britannia, September 13th, 1876; Virginia Blackwood in *Poor Little Joe*, a dramatisation by her husband, G. Murray Wood, at the Park, Camden Town, July 2nd, 1877; Miss Woodyer in *Poor Jo* by Henry Davenport at the Theatre Royal, Southampton, February 25th, 1878, and Kessie Wood in a play contrived by herself, *Joe the Poor Waif*, at the Rotunda, Liverpool, July 4th, 1881. The stage in the suburbs and provinces was literally haunted by waifs.

Bleak House, in addition to dramas, suggested some theatrical pices rather in the nature of burlesque. *Only a Waif; or, The Dedlock Mystery*, described as an Opera Comique, was given at Greenwich on May 4th, 1876, hard on the heels of Rhoys' earnest dramatisation there. *Jo v Jo*, by F. Green and Oswald Allen, at the Surrey on September 25th of the same year was a skit that sadly misfired. There was an Old Joe in it played by the comedian James Fawn and a Young Jo played by Kate Bentley. Their encounters were with Bucket, a policeman, and Philander Patterson, a theatrical manager.

In serious mood was *Move On; or, The Crossing Sweeper* by

James Mortimer produced at the Grand, Islington, on September 1st, 1883. The Grand was a handsome new playhouse which had risen, Phoenix-like, from the ashes of the burnt down Philharmonic. After an existence of no more than four years this new house also fell victim to the flames as in turn did its successor; three fires on the same site. In *Move On*, Lydia Cowell played the crossing-sweeper, a performance she repeated when the play, renamed *Jo the Outcast*, was given in the West End for a Charity Matinée at the Lyric on July 5th, 1892.

But before then an adaptation by J. Palgrave Simpson, *Lady Dedlock's Secret*, was given an afternoon performance on March 26th, 1884, at the Opera Comique. This same version had been seen ten years earlier at Her Majesty's Opera House, Aberdeen, on April 3rd, 1874. A company of amateurs, the Windsor Strollers, gave the piece at the Theatre Royal, Windsor, on November 28th, 1883. Keen and enthusiastic Lady Monckton played Lady Dedlock, a very effective rôle for her. She acted the part again at the Opera Comique matinée but this time it was with a professional company; C. W. Somerset as Sir Leicester, Robert Pateman (an erstwhile Guppy) as Tulkinghorn, Howard Russell as Bucket, Ernest Hendrie as Guppy and Dorothy Dene as Esther. The Jo was young Charles Coote. Hearty disapproval of the play came from Charles Dickens the Younger. He objected to the liberties taken by Simpson and wrote: "It is, perhaps, excusable that Krook should have murdered Mr. Tulkinghorn and have been denounced by Jo, who was a witness to the transaction, also that Jo should, among many other remarkable figures of speech, describe Lady Dedlock as saying that she was a servant though not with manners to conform. But the conclusion of the play in which Lady Dedlock (out of her mind) is escorted back to Chesney Wold by Jo, and has a regular conventional knock-about stage death scene, while Jo—who like Tiny Tim does not die—weeps by her side, to form a picture, is a little too much." It might be noted that an adaptation by the Younger Dickens of his father's *The Old Curiosity Shop* was running at the time at the same theatre in the evening bill.

New adaptations of the novel continued. There was *Bleak House* at the Grand Theatre, Walsall, given by the Charles Dickens Drama Syndicate on September 28th, 1892. Another *Bleak House* had a first performance on June 1st, 1903, at the last of the Grand Theatres, Islington. The version, sub-titled *Events in the Life of Jo* was by Oswald Brand, the manager of the Playhouse. Conspicuous in the cast were Kate Brand as Jo, Leonard Yorke as Sir Leicester, Helen Bancroft as Lady Dedlock and May Howard as Hortense. During his term in office, Brand produced more of his Dickens dramatisations at the Grand; *Little Nell*, *Oliver Twist* and *No Thoroughfare*.

Bleak House by James Stillwell and Wilfred Benson given at the Theatre Royal, Margate, on November 26th, 1903, and a Music Hall Sketch, *Poor Joe*, at the Holloway Empire in London, March 3rd, 1911, are the last professional productions to be recorded in Britain.

Returning to American activities, there was an anonymous

Poor Joe at the Union Square Theatre, New York, on July 23rd, 1877, in which two Boston favourites, Mrs. Thomas Barry and Mary Cary played Lady Dedlock and Joe respectively. *Tom All Alone's*, another stage version, was produced in the city at Booth's Theatre on March 11th, 1878, with N. S. Wood as the crossing-sweeper. As a juvenile star Wood had gathered some reputation in a melodrama *The Boy Detective*. Neither of these dramatisations stood up against the version in use by Madame Janaushek who still continued to act Lady Dedlock and Hortense. Throughout the 1870's and '80's the piece was foremost in her repertoire. When, in the course of time, she relinquished the two parts they were taken over by Jane Coombs in a revival of the work at Miner's Theatre, New York, on May 11th, 1891.

Combining the two characters in performance was a feature that was to survive and in Paul Kester's dramatisation *Lady Dedlock*, given at the Ambassadors' Theatre, New York, on December 31st, 1928, the Canadian actress, Margaret Anglin, did virtuoso work, appearing alternately first as one and then the other. Her Lady Dedlock missed nothing of dignity and her Hortense nothing of malevolence. Among the players were Hubert Druce as Inspector Bucket, St. Clair Bayfield as Sir Leicester and Margaret Shackleford as Esther. The little Jo had to do was done by Charles Cromer. No other play on the subject was been staged in America since though a new version by John Patrick is said to be in preparation.

In the home amateur field may be mentioned two snippets by Daisy Melville Vance, published in 1935, *Breaking the News* and *Inspector Bucket of Scotland Yard*. There was also *Lady Dedlock's Secret* dramatised by Miss Evans (1936) and an effective *Bleak House* by Tom Mason, adaptor in chief for the Dickens Players of Palmer's Green (1936). Gladys Waterer made a first-class adaptation, *Bleak House*, for the Dickens Players of Broadstairs, fourteen years later, in 1950. The most recent version is *Death of a Lawyer* by Eric Jones-Evans due for production this year.

A unique side line, or should it be side-show, is a marionette performance of the story. The wooden actors who played in a specially prepared version, were discovered by Gerald Morice, the authority on puppets.

RECENT DICKENSIANA

Martin Chuzzlewit and "The Liberator." K. J. Fielding. *Notes and Queries*. June.

Review: *The Heart of Charles Dickens*. Ada B. Nisbet. Dickens and Scott: a reply to Mr. Fielding. Lauriat Lane, Jr. *Nineteenth Century Fiction*. June.

Charles Dickens and the Department of Practical Art. K. J. Fielding. *Modern Language Review*. July.

"Widow of Charles Dickens." A play in one act. Norman Holland. Samuel French, Ltd. 1s. 6d.

NOTES ON THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP

By T. W. HILL

(continued from page 142).

CHAPTER 47

1. NEAR MIDNIGHT . . . SUPPER. In the days before railways the inns on the main roads were often open all night for the reception and refreshment of travellers by coach.

2. ONLY HALF-BAPTISED. Half-baptising is baptising privately or without full ceremonial rites, as for example, in the case of a person on a death-bed. In *Sketches by Boz*, II: "The Curate," got "out of bed at half-past twelve o'clock one winter's night to half-baptise a washerwoman's child in a slop-basin." The term was often used derisively for an inexperienced person, a greenhorn, an innocent. Sam Weller once asked Mr. Pickwick "where *was* you half-baptised?"

CHAPTER 48

1. JOURNEYS ARE VERY PERILOUS. An echo of Mr. Pickwick's address to the Club: "Travelling was in a troubled state and the minds of coachmen were unsettled . . . Stage-coaches were upsetting in all directions, horses were bolting, boats were overturning, and boilers were bursting."

2. NURSING HIS LEFT LEG. A characteristic attitude that appealed to Dickens. In chapter 9 Quilp had "one leg cocked carelessly over the other," and in *Pickwick Papers* (chapter 31) Sergeant Snubbin was "nursing his left leg."

3. OUR MUTUAL FRIEND. In spite of H. W. Fowler's dictum that the title of Dickens's novel *Our Mutual Friend* (1862) "has no doubt much to do with the currency of [the incorrect] mutual friend" the expression was in common use long before Dickens's time. Here is an example from Scott: "We have several mutual friends" (*The Antiquary*, chapter xliii). Dickens used it all his life, both in his writings and in his correspondence. It occurs here in *The Old Curiosity Shop* (1840), *Bleak House* (1852), *Little Dorrit* (1853), *Reprinted Pieces* (1857); all before *Our Mutual Friend*.

4. PHANTASMAGORIA. An exhibition in London in 1802. A magic lantern so arranged that the carriage can be moved towards or away from the screen on which the picture is thrown so that the image grows larger or smaller, sometimes with weird effect. The modern cinematograph does this sort of thing to much greater perfection.

CHAPTER 49

1. GRINNIDGE. This spelling of the correct pronunciation of the word Greenwich is introduced to emphasise the illiteracy of the two waterside men.

2. PANTALOONS WITHOUT STRAPS. Fashion used to insist on straps under the boots or shoes to hold the pantaloons or trousers tight to prevent "bagging" at the knees; those without straps would be lacking in neatness and finish.

3. GHOST OF HAMLET'S FATHER. Sampson Brass's mental picture of Quilp recalls the appearance of the Ghost in *Hamlet*

"in the very clothes he wore on work-a-days." Horatio saw the ghost in "the very armour he had on when he th' ambitious Norway combated" (I., i), "armed at all points, exactly, cap-à-pie" (I., ii), "in complete steel" (I., iv), "in his habit as he lived" (III., iv).

CHAPTER 50

1. YOU JADE. The word jade is of unknown derivation but its use is very ancient, certainly as old as Chaucer's time; it is applied usually in a contemptuous way to an inferior horse; from the sixteenth century it has been used, sometimes playfully, as an epithet for a woman: Quilp, we may depend, meant to be spiteful when he applied it to his wife. (The greenish stone known as jade gets its name from quite another source; it is from a Spanish word for the loins, for pains in which it was supposed to be a panacea.)

2. OF ALL THE GIRLS. The first line of "Sally in Our Alley," a song by Henry Carey (d. 1743), "one of the most striking and original melodies that ever emanated from the brain of a musician." (Grove.)

3. YET LOVED I AS MAN. A quotation from the same poem as that referred to in chapter 7, note 5:

"Yet lov'd I as man never lov'd;
A love without decay;
Oh, my heart, my heart is breaking
For the love of Alice Gray."

4. THE TRIUMPH. The name of an old country dance still popular in Scotland, in which the dancers line up and promenade round the dance hall.

CHAPTER 51

1. QUITE A BUFFOON. Brass was referring to Buffon, as is made plain in the next paragraph. Georges Louis Leclerc Comte de Buffon (1707-1788) was one of the great naturalists of all time. His great work was *Histoire Naturelle* in fifteen volumes, 1747-67.

CHAPTER 53

1. CROSS-LEGGED . . . HOLY WARS. The crossed legs of some tomb-effigies do not necessarily mean that the subject of the memorial had been to the Crusades, for many tombs of crusaders do not shew the crossed legs and many crossed-legged effigies do not represent crusaders.

CHAPTER 56

1. 'T WAS EVER THUS. One of the best remembered of the ballads in Thomas Moore's poetical romance *Lalla Rookh* (1817). The quotation is correct except in the last line which is characteristic of Dick's frivolous nature.

2. 'TIS NOW THE WITCHING HOUR. This little bit of the ritual of the Glorious Appollers is adapted from *Hamlet*, act iii, scene 2, which reads:

"'Tis now the very witching-time of night
When churchyards yawn, and Hell itself breathes out
Contagion to the world."

3. ALL'S WELL. A duet in Thomas Dibdin's *The English Fleet*. For a long period a favourite item in "musical evenings" in the home; the music is by John Braham.

4. MAY WE NE'ER WANT A ———. The last two lines of the first verse of a song, "Since the first dawn of reason," by J. Davy:
 "And my motto, though simple, means more than it says:
 'May we ne'er want a friend or a bottle to give him'."

CHAPTER 57

1. WHEN LOVELY WOMAN STOOPS TO FOLLY. A poem of two stanzas occurring in *The Vicar of Wakefield* (chapter xxiv) by Oliver Goldsmith (1759).

2. EVENING HYMN AND GOD SAVE THE KING. An impossible combination, one would think, even for so unmusical a person as Brass. The Evening Hymn is presumably Bishop Ken's "Glory to Thee, my God, this night."

3. TEMPER IT . . . TO THE SHORN LAMBS. This beautiful apophthegm, so scriptural in appearance, is from *The Sentimental Journey* (Maria) by Laurence Sterne (1713-1768): "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb." A similar sentiment occurs in *Jacuba Prudentum* by George Herbert (1593-1632): "To a close-shorn sheep, God gives wind by measure." (Sterne and Herbert were both clergymen.)

4. YOUNG SNOBBY. A snob, of uncertain derivation, is one who aspires to associate with those of superior rank. Thackeray is credited in some quarters with the introduction of the word in this sense, and undoubtedly made it popularly current by his Snob Papers in *Punch* in 1846. Mr. Chuckster however is using it here as a well-understood term in 1840. Dickens uses it again in *Little Dorrit*, I, 10, in connexion with the Circumlocution Office.

5. GENERAL POSTMAN. During the publication of *The Old Curiosity Shop* (1840) Penny Post was introduced all over the country and the postmen who delivered the letters were dubbed "general postmen" to distinguish them from the Twopenny Postmen who had delivered letters in the London area previously.

6. CHOICE PURL. Ale, nearly boiling, flavoured with spice and sugar and mixed with gin; "a rather strong and heady compound" indeed.

7. MODERATE YOUR TRANSPORTS. Transports are excited feelings by which one is carried away or transported from or out of one's usual calmness. "Moderate your transports" (Dickens's phrase) so happily expresses the necessity for moderation that it has become a common saying.

CHAPTER 58

1. SINCE LIFE IS LIKE A RIVER FLOWING. Dick's free adaptation of one of Moore's "National Airs." When the wine-cup is smiling: [Italian air]. There are two eight-line stanzas and the last four lines run:

"Yet though life like a river is flowing
 I care not how fast it goes on, boy, on,
 So the grape on its bank is still growing,
 And Love lights the waves as they run."

2. GO WHERE GLORY WAITS 'EM. Adapted from Moore's Irish Melody: "Go where glory waits thee."

3. FARE THEE WELL. Byron's poem with the same title:
 "Fare thee well; and if for ever,
 Still for ever, fare thee well."

It is set to music as a part-song.

4. ALL-FOURS. Like Cribbage, to which Sophy Cheggs was accustomed, All-fours is a card game for two or four players: it gets its name because there are four chances for scoring, viz.: high, low, jack and game.

5. RING THE CHANGES. A figurative expression for trying several ways. It is taken from the art of bell-ringing and the methods of changing the order in which chimes are rung.

6. FROM SPORT TO SPORT THEY HURRY HER. Adapted from the lyric, "Oh no, we never mention her" by Thomas Haynes Bayly:

"From sport to sport they hurry me
 To banish my regret,
 And when they win a smile from me
 They think that I forget."

7. IRON HAS ENTERED INTO HER SOUL. An allusion to Psalm CV, verses 17-18:

"He had sent a man before them: even Joseph,
 who was sold to be a bond-servant;
 Whose feet they hurt in the stocks: the
 iron entered into his soul."

(Prayer Book version.)

8. AWAY WITH MELANCHOLY. An anonymous lyric written to a melody in Mozart's "Die Zauberflöte." In *Our Mutual Friend*, Eugene Wrayburn quotes the whole first verse but decided not to sing "fal la" (which is comparatively unmeaning):

"Away with melancholy,
 Nor doleful changes ring
 On life and human folly,
 But merrily let us sing
 Fal la."

9. ARISING WITH THE SUN. Adapted from the Morning Hymn by Bishop Thomas Ken (1637-1711):

"Awake, my soul, and with the sun
 Thy daily stage of duty run . . ."

CHAPTER 60

1. DYER'S POLE. When shop-signs were much more common than they are now, dyers and cleaners hung over the shop door a suit of clothes from the end of a pole, as an advertisement. A similar sign is still occasionally suspended outside the slop-shops in sea-port towns to advertise their wares.

2. TWELVE POUNDS STERLING. The annual certificate to-day for a solicitor does not cost quite so much (£3 to £9).

3. FALSE COLLAR. This term for a detachable collar has quite fallen out of use. Before the 1830's the collar seems always to have been a part of the shirt, and the fact that Kit wore a false collar is perhaps meant to emphasise his lowly station in life.

CHAPTER 61

1. CHURCH CATECHISM. It seems rather incongruous reading for a lad in prison however innocent, especially as Kit's mother had a seat in Little Bethel which was a dissenting place of worship.

2. DRINK OF THIS CUP . . . REALITY. An exact quotation of the first four lines of one of Moore's Irish Melodies.

3. BARCLAY AND CO. This old-established brewery firm dates from 1781, when Robert Barclay and John Perkins bought the brewing business of Henry Thrale (dating from the seventeenth century). To this day the names of Barclay and Perkins have never been absent from the board of management.

CHAPTER 62

1. WET THE OTHER EYE. See chapter 17, note 1.

CHAPTER 63

1. TO THIS INDICTMENT. As one would expect from Dickens's knowledge of legal matters, the indictment is correctly stated. Theft was then, as now, a felony, but the punishment was much more severe and might involve transportation. The offence is "against the peace of our Sovereign Lord the King, his crown and dignity" because it is the Crown who prosecutes in all indictable offences.

2. WHERE DID YOU DINE YESTERDAY? This series of questions may be compared with the similar badgering undergone by Mr. Winkle at the hands of Mr. Skimpin in the trial of Mr. Pickwick (*Pickwick Papers*, chapter 34).

CHAPTER 64

1. PRINCESS OF CHINA. This story is related in the *Arabian Nights* in the Two Hundred and Fourteenth Night.

2. SPEAK, SISTER, SPEAK. An outstanding example of the theatrical bent of Swiveller's mind.

3. PRETTY POLLY, SAY. This is a quotation from Macheath's song in *The Beggar's Opera* (1728) by John Gay:

" Pretty Polly, say,
When I was away,
Did your fancy never stray
To some newer lover? "

CHAPTER 65

1. TWO GOOD MILES. The Marchioness shewed a deep cunning for one who apparently seldom if ever went out in the tortuous streets of the city. If she went westwards she must have reached the Soho district and if she went east she would have got nearly as far as Bow: before turning to make her way to Mr. Witherden's office.

2. STREW THEN OH STREW, A BED OF RUSHES. This couplet appears in two of Moore's glees: "Oh, Lady fair" (used with such effect by Pip and his friends in *Great Expectations*, chapter 13) and "Holy be the Pilgrim's Sleep." There are slight nominal differences, and Dickens does not adhere strictly to either.

CHAPTER 66

1. SINCE LAWS WERE MADE. The first two lines, correctly quoted, from one of Macheath's songs in *The Beggar's Opera*:

"Since laws were made for ev'ry degree
To curb vice in others as well as me,
I wonder we ha'n't better company
Upon Tyburn tree."

2. MR. ABEL HOBbled TO THE DOOR. In chapter 14 it is stated that Mr. Garland had a club-foot and that "even in the club-foot he (Abel) and the old gentleman were precisely alike." Yet this is the only other allusion to that deformity all through the story.

3. I ANSWER TO ALL THESE QUESTIONS—QUILP. This statement by Sampson Brass is a repetitive form of indictment used again by Dickens in *David Copperfield* (chapter 52) when Mr. Micawber exposes Uriah Heep as HEEP. The similarity is further marked by Sampson's efforts to silence Sally in the same way that Uriah commanded his mother to be silent.

4. IN FOR A PENNY. An old maxim; it is found in Ravenscroft's *Canterbury's Guests* (1695): "Well, then, o'er shoes, o'er boots, and in for a penny in for a pound." Cf. "As well be hanged for a sheep as for a lamb," and "go the whole hog," etc.

5. NECESSITY HAS NO LAW. "Necessity knows no law," the usual rendering of this adage, is as old as the Roman Empire: a maxim of Publius Syrus (A.D. 42) is translated: "Necessity knows no law except to conquer." It has, of course, become the excuse of the tyrannous and despotic, as well as of the unscrupulous.

6. MAKE A CLEAN BREAST. Breast is often used figuratively to include the heart, emotions and thoughts, so to make a clean breast is to confess everything openly and without reservation all one's thoughts and motives for action.

7. RETRIBUTION TRAVELS SLOWLY. This is doubtless an allusion to the poem "Retribution" by H. W. Longfellow (1807-82) in which occur the lines:

"Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small;
Though with patience He stands waiting, with exactness He guides all."

8. AND SHE SHALL WALK IN SILK ATTIRE. The opening of a ballad, "The Siller Crown," by Susanna Blamire (1790):

"And ye shall walk in silk attire
And siller hae to spare,
Gin ye'll consent to be my bride
Nor think on Donald mair."

CHAPTER 67

1. BANSHEE. An English approximation of "Bean sidhe" the Irish name of a fairy woman or spirit who foretells approaching death by wailing.

2. RED HEAD. It is interesting to note that Sampson Brass in this book, and Uriah Heep in *David Copperfield* written ten

years later, both disreputable lawyers of a cringing nature, are endowed with red hair.

3. SWAMP . . . WHERE PIRATES HAD HUNG. Quilp's body had been carried by the current as far as least as Greenwich marshes (? Bugsby's Marsh, about eight miles; in Phiz's illustration there is a post marked 12) where the bodies of executed pirates were hung in chains. This custom was discontinued in 1827.

CHAPTER 68

1. BOX FOR POOR PRISONERS. These boxes were placed outside debtors' prisons to receive the alms of sympathetic passers-by. Sometimes, as at the Fleet Prison, the prisoners themselves were permitted to solicit money. (See *Pickwick Papers*, chapter 42).

2. TORCHES GOING ON BEFORE. These torches or links, generally of tarred rope or resinous wood, were carried in front of passengers or vehicles on dark or foggy nights by link-boys (boys often meant men), and on arrival at the destination were put out by being thrust into the extinguishers on the railings, a few specimens of which may still be found.

3. MORTAL QUANTITY OF VINEGAR. "Mortal" in its true meaning of "deadly" has crept into common speech as a hyperbole for extremely great and for at least two hundred years has been used in this sense. In Lady Cowper's *Diary* (1716) she writes of the Duke of Roxburghe taking mortal pains. In 1778 Susan Burney wrote to her sister Fanny that she was "mortal fond of the book and has got it by heart." Dickens several times puts the word into the mouth of his less-educated characters, such as Peggotty.

4. BLUSHING LITTLE BARBARA, ETC. This paragraph, with its constant repetition of Barbara's name with changes rung on a wealth of adjectives, is thought by J. W. T. Ley to be inspired by a duet popular in the early nineteenth century: "Sweet little Barbara" (see *The Dickensian*, 1931, page 218).

CHAPTER 69

1. ANCIENT BUFFALO. This over-familiar and disrespectful reference to the old gentleman may have been due to some faint association in Chuckster's mind between the Glorious Apollers (of which he was a member) and the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes (of which he was probably not a member), on whose ritual that of the Apollers may have been modelled. The R.A.O.B. had been founded in 1822 by William Leslie, a member of the Old Order of Bull-Mystics, whose Rites and Ceremonies formed the basis of the constitution of the R.A.O.B., the Bull being changed to Buffalo. The Bull-Mystics claimed an origin dating back to the dimmest past (some authorities said to 10,000 B.C.).

2. IN THE RUMBLE. The outer back seat of a carriage, usually allocated to the servants, is immediately over the axle, where the sound of the wheels on the rough surface of the road is most noticeable.

CHAPTER 70

1. STRUCK THE HOUR OF MIDNIGHT. The carriage started from London at nine a.m. (chapter 69), and if the village where Nelly

lay is correctly identified as Tong, a distance of 135 miles had to be covered. The party travelled all day, then all night during which the story of the two brothers was related, then all the next day till the following midnight; altogether 39 hours at an average speed of nearly four miles an hour through rough snowy weather in the depth of winter. Allowing for stoppages for changing horses, refreshments, etc., this was not a bad performance, and shews how careful Dickens was with the details of his narrative.

2. STILL CARRYING THE BIRDCAGE. Dickens put in the bird-cage no doubt for the emotional value it would have in the plot, but it raises the question, how did the bird stand that long journey in the cold weather, jolted about in the coach the whole way and then carried the last three or four miles which Kit walked. Dickens may himself have had some doubts, for he wrote to Cattermole, the artist: "... There has been a fall of snow. Kit, leaving [the two gentlemen] behind, runs to the old house, and, with the lanthorn in one hand and the bird in its cage in the other, stops for a moment . . . If you have any difficulty about Kit, never mind about putting him in." A glance at the resulting picture shews that Kit has tried to cover the bird-cage with a cloth, but it has blown on one side exposing the bird to the inclement weather.

CHAPTER THE LAST

1. ENDLESS FLIGHT OF STAIRS. The tread-mill; another name for this unproductive form of exercise for prisoners was "the everlasting staircase." The whole of the first part of this chapter is in Dickens's best manner of gentle satire.

2. ROYALTY'S OWN CARRIAGE. These were of course prisoners' vans, with the Royal Monogram on the sides. They were also known to Cockneys as "Black Marias," a name said to be of American origin.

3. COMMITTED SUICIDE. This was the verdict at the inquest on Quilp, but the narrative in chapter 67 says "he staggered and fell" and that he tried, in vain, to save himself, and shouted on two occasions for rescue.

4. STAKE THROUGH HIS HEART. This accompaniment to a suicide's burial at a cross-road was abolished by Act of Parliament in 1823; it was probably a survival from mediaeval times of the superstition that vampires rise from their graves to suck the blood of sleeping persons. The stake was to hold the body down.

5. SHE WAS RICH. As Quilp left no will, his wife as his only living next-of-kin and heir inherited the whole of his estate, real and personal. She was filial enough to provide for her mother, who probably felt a certain satisfaction in having some share of Quilp's money.

6. ITALIAN IMAGE LAD. Among the many itinerant street vendors were the Italian youths, from the Italian colonies in Soho and near the Gray's Inn Road, who carried, either on their heads or suspended from their shoulders, wooden trays displaying plaster (or chalk) casts of classical figures and busts. These figures were quite cheap ranging in price from sixpence to half-a-crown. (See *London Labour and the London Poor* by H. Mayhew, 1851.)

7. OLD PARR OF PONIES. Thomas Parr, said to have been

born in 1483, died in 1635 (aged 152 years), is the typical and now traditional emblem of longevity—after Methuselah.

8. **SMOKING BOX.** This was the current name for a summer-house erected in the garden, for tobacco-smoking was not permitted indoors. Diaries of the period record many instances of male guests retiring to their bedrooms, if they could not go into the garden, and smoking up the chimney to prevent the fumes reaching the rooms of the ladies downstairs.

9. **HOSPITAL IN PARIS.** The Morgue, to which are taken to await identification bodies found in the Seine.

10. **THINGS PASS AWAY.** An adaptation from Psalm xc, 9:
 "We bring our years to an end, as it
 were a tale that is told."

(Prayer Book version.)

POSTSCRIPT.—Of the identity of the Old Curiosity Shop itself, it is only necessary to state here that the shop so-called situated in Portugal Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields is certainly not that of the book. At the time (1840) when the book was being written, the shop was occupied by a "herald and sign painter" named Jennings. The misleading inscription "immortalised by Charles Dickens" was blitzed out of existence during the World War II, but has since been restored.

Concluded

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP

Contributions for this page are invited. Press cuttings not acceptable.

WOLVERHAMPTON

The season just concluding has brought both pleasure and disappointment. Our Chairman, who has expended so much deeply appreciated time, trouble and thought, on our affairs for three years, has decided to retire for a time. Mrs. D. Davis has been appointed to succeed him. The Birmingham Branch, bringing their dramatic production of *Hard Times*, provided us with a most enjoyable evening, due to the great skill of both company and producer, and another meeting was devoted to the film *Nicholas Nickleby*. An excellent evening was provided by Miss Ruth Whittaker from London. Other meetings were filled by "Twenty Questions," and by Mr. A. Williams, who gave a splendidly dramatic version of *Great Expectations*. The season ended with an excursion to Ludlow and its neighbourhood. It has now been decided to launch our own dramatic section, and Mrs. Gladys Scott, L.A.M.D.A., Gold Medallist (Hons.), has generously arranged both to guide its destiny and to provide it with a meeting place at the Y.W.C.A.—G.W.

The thanks and congratulations of the Fellowship are offered to the following retiring and newly-appointed Secretaries: Miss E. C. Ritchie and Mr. Samuel Ritchie of New York, Mrs. C. Parsons and Mrs. R. Martin of Palos Verdes, Miss Isobel Mount and Mrs. Flora E. Bell of Seattle, and Miss Downs and Miss Watkins of Lytham St. Annes.

A hearty welcome to England is extended to Mr. Michael J. Mooney of Boston, and Canon W. J. Merrick of Winnipeg.

Obituary

Liverpool Branch has suffered a great loss in the death of Mr. T. N. Philip at the age of 91. Believed to have been a member of the Branch from its inception in 1903, Mr. Philip was one of its earliest Secretaries and later President. Through all the years he gave unceasing and generous help to the Branch in a multitude of ways, and although during the last year or two of his life severe illness prevented his attendance at meetings, he retained his interest in the Branch and the Fellowship generally. I.V.H.

In London we record the death of Mr. A. R. Rule at the age of 89. For many years he was the Fellowship's trusted legal adviser. An enthusiastic Dickensian, he took the keenest interest in our welfare and was always warmly welcome on account of his delightful personality and sense of humour. L.C.S.

Eastbourne has lost a great friend by the death of Mr. J. R. Dear, and Southend mourns the death of Mrs. B. C. D. Osman, the wife of the Hon. Secretary, after a long illness. Birmingham records the death of two well loved members, Mrs. J. H. Lewis and Miss G. Morris.

Broadstairs Annual Dickens Festival

1953

OCTOBER 21st - 24th inclusive

Organised by the Broadstairs Branch of the
Dickens Fellowship

DICKENS PLAY - - "A TALE OF TWO CITIES"

Play by Gladys Waterer

DICKENSIAN RECITAL

CONDUCTED TOUR

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Further particulars of the Festival may be obtained from Hon. Sec., Broadstairs Branch, Dickens Fellowship, Dickens House, Broadstairs.

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